

*A Guide to Knowledge :*  
OR, AN  
INTRODUCTION  
Into the Fundamentals of  
RELIGION.

Wherein is succinctly handled, the  
Principal Methods taken up  
and proceeded in by GOD,  
from the Days of Eternity to  
the end of time, in order to effect  
the Eternal Salvation of Men.

---

*Buy the Truth and sell it not, al-  
so Wisdom, Instruction, and  
Understanding. Prov. 23. 23.*

---

Licens'd. Nov. 6.

J. F

---

L O N D O N,

Printed for the Author, and sold  
by Tho. Fabian at the Bible in  
St. Paul's Church Yard, the  
Corner Shop next Cheapside,  
1689.

## A TABLE of the Principal Heads.

- I. **A** Discourse of the Essence, Perfections, and Decrees of God, p. 1.
2. That God doth unfeignedly will the Eternal Salvation of every Mankind made apparent, p. 16.
3. The Way and Method which God hath ordained in order to effect the same, made plain and easie, p. 21.
4. A Discourse of Perseverance, p. 62.

To

## Epistle Dedicatory

To the Reverend Ministers of the Gospel, Mr. John How, and Mr. Daniel Burgess.

Reverend Sirs,

**R**Especting the *Product* of this *Presumption*, as I am not capable of the *Forefight*, so I am not concern'd at the *Effect*. My honest and innocent Intendment (I trust) shall compose my Mind to a sedate Tranquility, under all the Censures that shall be cast upon me. My Design in what I have written being to advance an universal good, was not Penn'd to please the Ear, but to feed the Understanding, and commodate the Soul. Wherefore, however unpolish'd it may appear to your more curious Eyes, yet my Charity obligeth me to hope, that Defects of this Nature, will pass without Rebuke, under the Cover of your Candour and Ingenuity. The Motive that induc'd this Dedication, was the Honourable Esteem I had of you as great Masters of Reason and Religion, and therefore expected both

Favour

*Epistle Dedicatory.*

Favour and Justice at your Hands, according to the Demerit of the Case: as also to silence some, who otherwise might vent their Ignorance, and Envy at too Profuse a Rate. Likewise I was not without hopes that hereby, my poor endeavours, might have the greater Success in obtaining their designed End, (*i. e. God's Glory in Man's Salvation.*) And I hope you will not be wanting to do what in you lies, to remove every Material Errour and Mistake which you apprehend in these Lines, or any other which with them may be presented unto your View. I conclude with my humble Request, that this Poor Pilgrim, may be receiv'd into your Houses, and accosted with that Entertainment the Sacred Oracle directs you to give to every Stranger, how know you but it may prove an *Angel* of the *Lord*. The God of all Goodness, increase and perpetuate your Happiness here, and Crown you with Immortal Joys hereafter. *So Prays, &c.*



# To the READER.

Christian Reader,

**T**He Consideration of the invaluable Worth and Inestimable Blessing of Truth and Peace in the Purity and Perfection of it, as also the dismal consequences of Ignorance and Error, hath conceived, and brought to the Birth, the following Lines, For with grief beholding the many Divisions amidst God's People, arising from that Mist of Darknes which remaineth upon their Understandings, and being well assured of the great Dishonour that accrues to God thereby in obstructing the Peace and Prosperity of Zion, and the Conversion and Salvation of Sinners, I was moved in Duty to my Maker, and Compassion to the Souls of Men, to Pen and Publish this Introduction into the Fundamentals of Religion; which being brief and plain, may have the easier Access into their hands and hearts: And had not some, and that Eminent for Parts and Learning, been very backward to survey and vindicate the Notions

## To the Reader.

*they Profess and Teach, it's more than probable these lines, with some other now extant, had been like an untimely Birth, that had never seen the Light; But to hear Men, viz. The Profess'd Ambassadors of Christ, publickly to Preach a Gospel, which is, yea and nay unto the World; I thought it my Duty (in this Way) with all meekness to endeavour their Instruction, who thus exposed themselves. Sometimes affirming, That in relation, to the present, future, and eternal State and Condition of Men, whether for Vertue or Vice, for Happiness or Misery, for Heaven or Hell, every particular individual Person that comes into the World was absolutely unconditionally and unalterably determined and decreed thereto by God before the Foundation of the World; and it may be in the same Sermon, tell the Auditors, That Vertue and Vice, Happiness and Misery, Heaven and Hell, is in their own choice; and that upon the well or ill improvement*

## To the Reader.

of their time, and means of Grace here, depends their Eternal Weal or Woe hereafter. Sometimes they'l represent God and Christ, as unfeignedly desiring, and really intending the Salvation of all Men; at other turns proclaim it a Damnable Doctrine to believe it; frequently you may hear them, with great seeming importunities exhort Sinners to repent, believe and obey the Gospel, and yet immediately tell them, These Duties are as much out of their reach, or as impossible to be performed by them, as it is for a Dead Corps to see, hear, speak and act; at the voice of the Living. Sometimes they represent Acts of Piety and Religion, as the main Work and Concern of Christians; at other times they make as if the sole concern thereof lay at Gods door, but never rightly inform either Sinner or Saint what God hath done on his part, and what Men may, can, yea must do on their part, in order to please God here, and enjoy him hereafter. Sometimes they

To the Reader.

Preach Terror to Believers; as if that they be not careful and diligent, they might so fall into Sin, as to miscarry to all Eternity; at other turns sow Pillows under their Elbows, and lull them asleep in vain Security and Presumption; *as if*, That every Soul that were once partaker of the least Dram of Saving Grace, could never Sin it felt out of God's Favour or miscarry as to its Eternal Concerns. *Multitudes of Instances might be given of Matters of this Nature, that daily fall from the Lips and Pens of Men, in respect to the Truths and Duties of Religion, which makes their Ministry very unsavoury, and unprofitable to the skilful and well-instructed Hearer, and prove, very prejudicial and destructive to the unlearned and unstable, which should teach every rational Understanding carefully to observe our Saviour's Caveat, Take heed who and what ye hear, and to act like the Noble Ebreans, searching the Scripture to see whether the things they hear be*

To the Reader.

be so or no, and compare spiritual things with spiritual; try all things, hold fast to that which is good : *And for your help herein, always observe these Rules* 1. Take up and close in with that which upon most strict examination appears most plain and near to your Understandings (spiritually enlightened) not that which is most consistent with your worldly Interest (Pleasures, Profits, or Honours.) Always let the most obscure and difficult Texts and Arguments yield to the most plain and easie. 2. Consider the nature, import, and tendency of the Doctrines proposed, which tends most to promote the Glory of God and advance Piety and Religion in the Hearts and Lives of Men, and the like; and let these be your Directors and Governors in your choice of Truth and Duties, relating to whatever you believe or practice. 3. Make constant Application to God for the Guidance of his Spirit, and see it be by Faith in the Name of Jesus and you may be certain of the Blessing of success therein; I pretend

## To the Reader

tend not to Infalibility, but out of a sensibleness of my own natural adict-  
edness to Failures and Imperfections,  
make it my unfeigned request to God,  
That what of Truth is Published  
be in, may go forth and prosper,  
and if there be ought of Error, it  
may be discovered and detected;  
and if any thing shall appear of  
that nature, I hope I shall do that  
honour to my Maker, and show that  
esteem to Truth and Duty as to  
make a publick acknowledgement of  
so great a Blessing. I conclude with  
my further humble suit unto Jeho-  
vah, that Triune God, Father, Son  
and Holy Spirit, That he will exert  
those Divine Perfections of his own  
Essence, which are most proper in  
the Wheel of Providence, so to  
Bless these my poor and worthless la-  
bours, as that they may become some  
ways instrumental to promote his  
own Glory in the Salvation of Man-  
kind, that so his creatures univer/al-  
ly may ascribe unto him (what is most  
worthily due) the Kingdom, Pow-  
er, and Glory, for ever and for ever.  
Amen.

*A Guide to Knowledge, or an  
Introduction into the Funda-  
mentals of Religion.*

( I ) **C**ONCERNING God, *That he is.*  
My design being not to  
Treat with *Atheists*; I shall only al-  
ledge this one Invincible Argument,  
Some Being was eternal, or some  
Being made it self. The later  
cannot be true, because it im-  
plies a Contradiction; for it suppo-  
ses a Thing to be, and not to be at  
the same Instant. The former then  
being true, 'tis inconsistent with  
Reason to ascribe Eternity to a mass  
of Corruption, rather than to  
an invisible, incomprehensible, and  
infinite Spirit. So that it being evi-  
dent that the World was created,  
by an Eternal Essence, the same  
Line of Reason still leads us for-  
ward to believe, that that Being,  
who gave Being unto all things,  
and that of nothing, must be infi-  
nite in all perfection. Upon which  
I assume this *Second Proposition*:  
*That God is the Perfection of all Excel-*  
*lency, and the Excellency of all Per-*

A

*fection*

*fection; That God is all good, the highest good, and nothing but what is so.*  
 [ To this agrees the Scripture *Job 11. 7. Deut. 32. 5. Psal. 92. 15. Isa. 40. 28. Mark 10. 18. 1 John 1. 5.* ] And such as is his Nature and Essence, such are all the Revelations he hath made of himself, by his Word or Works, whether of Creation, or Providence; such were all his Decrees and Purposes in Eternity, and such are all his Acts in Time. So that it may be truly said, Whatsoever is in God, or whatsoever proceedeth forth from God, is infinitely Glorious and Excellent in the Highest Degree of Perfection. And consequently there can be no error, no contrariety, no variableness or shadow of Turning in him. *Job 23. 13. Deut. 32. 39, 40. Jer. 17. 10. James 1. 15. Psal. 99. 1, 2, 3, 4.*  
 From whence I advance a *Third Proposition, i. e.* That all the Decrees and Purposes of God in Eternity, and all the Acts and Revelations of himself in Time, are so intirely One, that the Later are none other than a Transcript or Declaration of the Former. As the Gift of his Son in time



time, declares his Decree to give him before time. So that this Notion rightly taken in and prosecuted, by the fore-mentioned streight Line of Reason (to the which the Scripture always adhere, and frequently commends. *Prov.* 26. 16. *Isa.* 1. 18. *Acts* 18. 4. *Rom.* 12. 1. 2. *Thes.* 3. 2. 2 *Pet.* 3. 15.) teacheth us to have recourse to the Revelations that God hath made of himself to us in his Word and Works; to understand his Purposes concerning us, before he made us. And such are the innumerable instances of his matchless Love and Bounty to all his Offspring (as thereby declared) that it is next a Kin to an Hellish *Phrenzie* to imagine any severe or cruel Purposes, or Decrees, concerning us, or any of us, before he made us. whatever obscure or unsearchable Depths we may meet withal, in any of his procedures towards us, yet we must and ought constantly to believe, that all that proceeds from this Fountain of Goodness (which is all Light and no Darkness; all Love and no Hatred &c.) must therefore

therefore be designed of him, for the real good and happiness of his Creatures. And wherein any meet with any thing of a contrary Aspect, yet may he with safety say, whatever my Maker means, by this or that Providence, or in this or that Portion of his Word; I am sure, (tho' I understand it not yet) it cannot intend me any infelicity, it comes from a boundless Ocean of Love, and cannot favour of any thing of a contrary Nature; see 2 Chron. 36. 15. Psal. 145. 8, 9. Isa. 55. 7, 8, 9. Lam. 3. 32, 33. Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23, & 33. 11. Jonah 4, 2, 10, 11. Mat. 23. 37. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Following then our fore-mentioned Guides, in order to our Information touching God's Decrees concerning us before we were, we are lead to believe, that the Decrees of God come under a Two-fold consideration: Such as are Absolute, Irresistible, and without all Condition; As his making the World, and Man therein, and his giving him Laws to walk by, &c. Secondly, Such

Such  
ble,  
diti  
As i  
Son  
ter  
O  
rou  
resp  
on  
in t  
beli  
wh  
dar  
Go  
me  
con  
is a  
an  
Co  
the  
cre  
sh  
un  
w  
Se  
L  
un

Such as are Absolute and Irresistible, on the considerations or conditions, by and in them proposed. As in case Man should Sin, to give his Son to Die for his Sin, and to enter into a New Covenant of Grace, &c. So that the Decrees of God touching his fallen Creature Man, respecting his Eternal State, were on the Conditions proposed by him in the Gospel; viz. That whosoever believeth, should be saved; and whosoever would not, should be damned. So that these Decrees of God, were not of persons under a meer Personal Consideration, but considered so and so qualified; that is all such as should believe in Christ and hold fast the beginning of their Confidence stedfast unto the End, they and only they were in the Decree of Gods Election. Such who should live and die impenitent and unbelieving; they and only they were in his Decree of Reprobation, So that 'tis evident, men in this Life are capable of passing from under the State of Reprobation, into

to

to a State of Election, and from under a State of Election into a State of Reprobation. *Jer.* 12. 7. 8. *Ezek.* 33. 13. *Rom.* 11. 20, 21. 22. *1 Cor.* 9. 27. *2 Cor.* 11. 3. *1 Tim.* 19. 1, 20. & *2 Tim.* 2. 11, 12. 13, 18. *Heb.* 3. 12, 13. and 6. 4, 5. 6. and 10. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. 38. *2 Pet.* 1. 10. *Jude* 12. *Rev.* 2. 4, 5, 11, 16, 22, 23, 25, 26, and 3. 2, 3, 4, 5. 11, 21. 'Tis the Godly, God hath set apart by his Eternal Decree for his Favourites, 'tis the Ungodly that are set apart by Eternal Decree, for the Subjects of his Wrath; *Psal.* 4. 3. *Jude* 4. So that men ceasing from Sin, and turning to God, pass from under the Decree of Reprobation, and men ceasing from Godliness, and turning again to Folly; pass from under God's Decree of Election: See *2 Tim.* 2. 20, 21. *1 John* 3. 14. *Ezek.* 33. 13, 14, 15. Thus Man is mutable in his Nature and Acts, but God is immutable. He loveth Righteousness, and hateth Iniquity (or Persons for it;)

rom  
o  
2  
7  
21  
3  
12  
5  
28  
2  
3  
God-  
nal  
the  
er-  
his  
bat  
ing  
De-  
ea-  
a-  
ker  
See  
E-  
a is  
ts,  
He  
a-  
or  
i )

t ; (where e're he finds it, *Gen. 4. 7.*  
*Psal. 5, 4, 5. Acts 10. 35. Rom. 2. 6,*  
to 11. This Scripture and ratio-  
nal definition or Doctrine of Gods  
Decrees, is very helpful in o-  
pening and explaining the main  
Truths of the Gospel; but the Noti-  
on that teacheth, that God in E-  
ternity, Absolutely, Irresistibly, and  
Unconditionally decreed all things  
that are done in Heaven, Earth or  
Hell, from the beginning of time  
to the Days of Eternity; or that  
such a particular Number of Men on-  
ly, should believe and be saved, and  
that the rest should disbelieve and  
perish: darkens the whole Counsel  
of God, and makes all Religion a  
meer Fable; not only implying one,  
but a legion of Contradictions: For  
it declares against, or opposeth  
these following Truths, *i. e.* Inno-  
cent Man's Power of standing.  
( Man having sinned ) the need of a  
Saviour. The necessity and utility  
of the Gospel, or any of its Pre-  
cepts, Promises or Threatnings.  
That Man's Eternal Felicity or Mi-  
sery

fery depends upon his well or ill im-  
 provement of his Time and Ta-  
 lents here : &c. It's attended also  
 with these evils, It supposeth God to  
 exalt the Devil and his Kingdom a-  
 bove his own, in giving him the most  
 Subjects. It makes God the Author  
 of Sin, it supposeth him divided a-  
 gainst himself, by having a secret  
 Will opposite to his revealed. And  
 so set his Precepts, Promises, and  
 Threatnings, against his Decrees ;  
 making the one a Cover for the bet-  
 ter Execution of the other, Impea-  
 cherh God's Sincerity and Sove-  
 raignty, as if he were afraid and a-  
 shamed of what he had done, and  
 therefore would, if he could, per-  
 swade his Creatures into a good O-  
 pinion of him, by deceitful illu-  
 sions. Seems as it were transport-  
 ed with Care and Zeal for their  
 Welfare , and makes use of the  
 most passionate and enamouring in-  
 vitations , and all but like those  
 Men, who for Divertisement pre-  
 tend Courtship to them , whom  
 they would abhor to marry. It o-  
 pens

pens a Door to all Prophaness and  
 Abomination, and discourages or  
 cuts the Sinews of all Industry and  
 Diligence, in the Ways of Virtue  
 and Piety; For what should invite  
 a Man to strive for that, from which  
 he knows, he is either Irreversibly  
 shut up, or else so Infallibly sure  
 of, that no negligence of his can  
 prevent it. It drives Men from God,  
 leads them into, and leaves them  
 in Despair, destroys the Nature of  
 Rewards and Punishment, and con-  
 sequently declares the last Judg-  
 ment a meer Delusion. All which is  
 easy for any thinking Person sud-  
 denly to discern. But there are Two  
*Objections* against this Notion of  
 God's Decrees, which I would re-  
 move: *First*, How can the Infalibi-  
 lity of God's fore knowledge be sal-  
 ved, in case Mens present Actions,  
 and future State, depends upon the  
 free-agency of Man's mutable Will? *Ans-*  
*wer*, Very well, because the Infalibi-  
 lity of God's Knowledge, ariseth not  
 from the necessity of the Actions of  
 his Creature, but the Perfections of  
 his

his Nature ; because 'tis as visible to God, that they will do them before they do them, as 'tis they have done them , when they are done. Men will do what they do do, tho' they might do otherwise ; or tho' God's Knowledge were not exercised about them : We grant a necessity supposed, but not made by Infallible Knowledge , but this ariseth not from Knowledge it self, but from the Truth of a Proposition ; As I must hear a Man Swear, before I can infallibly know that he sweareth ; now my Knowledge supposeth , but lays no necessity on this Person's Swearing. His Swearing was the Cause of my Knowledge, not my Knowledge of his Swearing ; for he would have sworn, if I had not heard him : And as our Knowledge of what is done, hath no influence to necessitate the doing thereof, no more has the Knowledge of God, for what Knowledge is in Man ? Foreknowledge is in God , and infinitely more, to all Perfection. Besides, 'tis considerable, that tho' God knows men



men will do such and such things, yet he likewise knows, that they may do otherwise. So that the doing or not doing of the Thing, grates not upon the perfection of his Knowledge; but the ground of this mistake ('tis conceived) ariseth, for want of a due distinction, between the Knowledge and Decrees of God. Knowledge is an Act of the Understanding, Decree is an Act of Will; we may know, but must not decree Evil; God must know, but cannot decree it, Yea, nothing is more evident, than that God decreed a many things which he fore-saw would never be, or not be as he decreed them; (that is speaking of the Later sort of his Decrees) as he decreed against all Sin: and therefore made a Law against it, and decreed that this Law should preserve in Life the Keepers of it; *Rom. 7. 10.* See also *Isa. 24. 5. Luke 7. 30. 1 Cor. 9. 14.* So he fore-knew a many things, which he never decreed, as all the Sin and Misery in the World. We grant he decreed the permission of the one, and

and Execution of the other: but this was not the Antecedent, but Consequent Will or Decree of God; As a Father that wills the obedience and happiness of his Child, yet likewise wills him Stripes, in case he rebel. The 2d. Obj. is, *That this Notion, diminisheth the Grace of God, exalts the Creature, makes him his own Saviour, &c.* Reply; This is a mistake, for, herein we do but suppose God, to act according to the Perfections of his Nature, and Man according to the Capacities of his, as given him of God: And this will appear by what follows, The Glory of Gods Grace, consists in the Freeness, Fullness, and Efficacy thereof; as touching which we hold, that whatsoever God hath contrived and decreed to do, or doth do in Time, for his Creature Man, is alone from the unsearchable Riches of his Free-Grace, not only without, but against the Merit of his Creatures. As to the fulness and effectualness of it, we believe, it is not only every way all-sufficient to bring his Creature Man to

to Happines : but that 'tis not confined within the scanty compass of an handfull of Men in comparison, but (like the Sun in the Firmament) compasseth the whole Earth, and extendeth it self to every Creature. As to the Will of the Creature, we hold and teach, That it is not in the least naturally inclined unto, or capable of, either to do, or think any thing that is good, and if left to it self, would be most desperately wicked, and servile unto Sin : So that whatsoever good thing any Man doth, he doth it by the Assistance of the free grace of God alone ; 'tis he that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and when ever any Soul is converted and turn'd to God, he hath not only Power given him of God, but is mightily assisted, or acted, by the concurrence of Supernatural Grace, in the improvement of that Power in effecting the same. And we believe that God gives a sufficiency of this Power to all men, and yet so that they may notwithstanding, so hide this

this Talent in a Napkin, as to mis-  
 carry to all Eternity. Now where  
 in then is this any diminution to  
 free grace, or exaltation of the Crea-  
 ture; is it any other than what the  
 Scripture every where declares: See  
*Isa.* 53. 5, 6. *John* 1. 29. & 3. 15, 16,  
 17, 18. & 5. 34. 40. and 12. 47.  
*Rom.* 5. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. and 8.  
 32. *Tit.* 2. 11. *Heb.* 7. 25. and  
*1 John* 5. 11. *Isa.* 45. 11. *Mat.* 11. 28.  
*Rev.* 2. 21. *John* 1. 16. *Rev.* 22. 17.  
 But these Errors rightly calculated,  
 appear most visible in the Meridian  
 of our Opponents Judgment, but the  
 further discovery thereof is decli-  
 ned at present. There are, we grant,  
 several Passages in Scripture, especi-  
 ally in *Paul's* Epistle to the *Romans*,  
 as *Peter* observeth, which seeming  
 to look another way, for want of due  
 Consideration, were and are by many  
 wrested, either to their own, or o-  
 thers destruction: *2 Pet.* 3. 15, 16.  
 A sad instance whereof we have up-  
 on publick Record, of one *Petrus Ila-*  
*suanus* a School-Master in *Hungary*,  
 who going to hang himself, gave  
 this

this dismal Account of the Reasons  
 that prompted him thereunto, by a  
 Writing left in his Closet. ( 1. ) That  
 he was of Calvin's Opinion, That  
 men are not dealt withal according to  
 their Works, good or Evil, but there  
 are more hidden causes of mens Eter-  
 nal Conditions. ( 2. ) That he was  
 of that woeful Company of Absolute  
 Reprobates, and that therefore ( tho'  
 his Life had been none of the worst )  
 he could not possibly be saved. ( 3. )  
 That being unable to bear those dread-  
 ful Apprehensions of Wrath, with  
 which he was affrighted, he hang'd  
 himself; these being some of his  
 last Words, I go to those Infernal  
 Lakes, an Eternal Reproach to my  
 Countrey, I commend you to God,  
 whose mercy is denied to me.  
 See Gods Love to Mankind: p. 212.  
 Wherefore against these Horrible Concep-  
 tions concerning God, I shall enveigh  
 in the Words of that Learned,  
 Author of that Book, called, The Recon-  
 cileableness of God's Prescience of the sins of  
 men, with the Wisdom and Sincerity of his  
 Counsels, and Exhortations to prevent them,  
 Pag. 39. Saith he, The Notion of the Good-  
 ness and Righteousness of God, methinks  
 should

should stick so close to our minds, that it should  
 be infinitely dearer unto us, than all our Senses  
 and Powers; and that we should rather  
 have our Sight, Hearing, and motive Power  
 or what not besides, disputed or even torn  
 away from us, than ever suffer our selves to  
 be disputed into a Belief, that the Holy and  
 good God (saith he) should irresistibly deter-  
 mine the wills of men to, and punish the  
 same thing, I say I should irresistibly decreed  
 the Eternal damnation of any of his Crea-  
 tures, before they had a Being, or had  
 done any good or evil. So that where-  
 ever we meet with any Scripture or Argu-  
 ment, that seems to favour any such Opi-  
 nion, we should always say, if we can-  
 not otherwise understand them, that for  
 any part I acknowledge my Ignorance of  
 the intent of them, but you shall as soon  
 perswade me to believe that there is no  
 God, or that I am no Creature, as to be-  
 lieve any such thing of that God whom  
 I adore and serve. Thus in the improve-  
 ment of these Truths, we are as it were  
 by the Hand lead to a right understand-  
 ing of all the great Truths and Mysteries  
 of the Gospel; Whereas, that other  
 Nation of Gods Decrees, is as it were, at  
 every turn Thwarting and Opposing us in  
 every Truth and Duty therein declared,  
 I shall add no more at present, but recom-  
 mend these Lines and all, into whose  
 hands they may come, to the Guidance,  
 and Blessing of the Almighty God, to  
 whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

*it show  
r Sens  
rather  
Power  
a sor  
ves t  
ly and  
deter  
h the  
ecree  
Crea-  
had  
ere-  
rgu-  
a O-  
an-  
for  
of  
oon  
no  
de-  
m  
e-  
re  
l-  
ey  
r  
t  
n  
a*

# The Guide to Knowledge

## Continued.

And here I propose to do these *Two* things.

*First* Make it appear, That God doth unfeignedly will and desire the Eternal Felicity and Salvation of every Son and Daughter of Adam.

*Secondly*, Make plain and easy, The Way and Method, which God hath ordained in order to effect the Eternal Felicity of these his Off-spring.

**A**ND here I shall proceed in this Building upon the fore-mentioned Foundation, to wit. The Infinite Perfections of that Being, upon Whom all our Beings and Religion, or Well-Being doth depend; wherefore:

First, God doth unfeignedly will the Eternal Felicity of every of his Off-spring Man: Because the Infinite Perfections of his Nature move, or oblige him thereunto. For they are

A

an

an Eternal Law unto him in all his proceedings. I shall not enlarge on all the Attributes of God, because of my design'd Brevity, but commend that fore-mentioned Book called God's Love to Mankind, to be perused on this Account. And briefly hint at these, (*i. e.*) The Wisdom, The Goodness, The Justice, and the Truth of God. *First*, The Wisdom of God, moves him to will the Felicity of, &c. No *Wise Artificer*, will be careless of any Noble and Excellent *Piece*, which his hands hath made, much less put it to Base and Ignoble use. No *Prudent Parent*, but will concern himself for the Felicity of his *Children*, and can we conceive the Infinitely Wise God, can be unconcern'd for the Felicity of any of his *Offspring*. Doth the Spirit of God, (*Job* 39. 13, 14, 15, &c.) reflect upon the Unnaturalness of the *Ostrich*, in being unconcern'd for her *Young*, as being destitute of Wisdom; and can we conceive, that the Infinitely Blessed *Pattern* of all

true



all his true Wisdom, should be more Un-  
 natural to his Off-spring? *Second-*  
*ly*, Consider his Goodness, and  
 is not the Infinite Perfection there-  
 of, so abundantly demonstrated  
 in the *Book of God's Word and Works*,  
 that it is Matter of Astonishment,  
 any Soul should harbour any severe  
 Notions concerning him. Heaven  
 is not fuller of *Stars*, nor the Earth  
 of *Creatures*, than all the Dispen-  
 sations of God to Men are, of *Proofs*,  
 that he is Infinitely propens'd and  
 inclin'd in Love and Goodness,  
 to Pity, Relieve, and Succour every  
 one of them. Seriously peruse these  
 Scriptures, *Gen.* 6. 6. *Exod.* 34. 6.  
*Neb.* 9. 17. *Job* 37. 23. *Psal.* 103.  
 8. and 119. 64. and 130. 3, 4. and  
 136 at large, and 145. 8, 9. *Num.*  
 14. 17, 18. *Isa.* 56. 7, 8, 9. *Jer.*  
 9. 24. *Lam.* 3. 22, 23. 32, 33.  
*Micah* 7. 18. *Jam.* 2. 13. and 3. 17.  
 We esteem it an Indignity, to have  
 any cruel *Act* ascribed unto us, and  
 shall we offer to cast the like Indig-  
 nity upon the Almighty? Is the  
 narrow scanty Bowels of Man, more

extensive and free ; than the Infinite  
 Compassions of God ? And are there  
 not many Men , who would offer  
 themselves ( if possible ) to a Thou-  
 sand Deaths , could they thereby  
 procure the Eternal Salvation of all  
 their Fellow Creatures ; *Rom. 9. 1, 2.*  
 And shall we imagine , God de-  
 lights to see the greatest Part of his  
 Creatures miserable , Yea , by un-  
 avoidable Decree , determine them  
 thereunto. This is to represent Man  
 more merciful than his Maker ,  
 which is far more absurd than to say ,  
 the least glimmering Sun-beam ,  
 hath more of Light and Heat there-  
 in , than the Sun it self. ( 3. ) The  
 Justice of God moves on in the same  
*Sphere* , for that directs to an impar-  
 tial and equal distribution , whether  
 of Favour or Punishments , to all Ob-  
 jects under one and the same Cir-  
 cumstances , that is not for depressing  
 the One , and exalting the Other ;  
 when both alike , are either Inno-  
 cent or Criminal ; and such are all  
 Mankind , whether considered be-  
 fore , or since the Fall ; and to this  
 agrees

agrees the clear Testimony of Scrip-  
 ture ; *Gen.* 18. 23 , *2 Chron.* 19. 7.  
*2 Sam.* 14 , 14. *Acts* 10. 34, *Rom.*  
*2.* 11. *Ephes.* 6. 9. *Col.* 3. 25.  
*1 Pet.* 1. 17. *James* 3. 17. Fourth-  
 ly, The Truth of God obligeth  
 him herunto, he hath in his  
 Word positively affirmed, That  
 'tis his Will all Men should be saved,  
*1 Tim.* 2 , 4. And that 'tis against  
 his Will any should Perish, *2 Pet.*  
*3.* 9. And God cannot deny himself,  
 or falsify his Word, or so much as  
 seem to be willing to that, which  
 in Reallity he is not ; and we have  
 as much Reason to question the  
 Truth of every Word of God as  
 that, that testifieth his unfeigned  
 desire of all his Creatures Happiness;  
 because no one Truth of God, is  
 more fully ( if so fully ) revealed in  
 the Scriptures, and for the which  
 we have not only the Word, but  
 the Oath of the Living God. *Ezek.*  
*33.* 11. Yea, he plainly testifieth  
 himself really concern'd for the  
 Infelicity and Misery, which his  
 Rebel Creatures, by their final Sin

and Impenitency, unavoidably bring upon themselves. With what Pathetick and Bowel-like Expressions, doth the Infinitely Gracious God, bewail their Loss and Ruine. From which nothing can be more evident, than that God did really desire the Eternal Felicity; even of those very Persons, that are now Irreversibly sunk into the Pit of Eternal Misery. Worthy to be written in *Letters* of Gold, are these and such like *Texts* of Scriptures, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16. *Psal.* 81. 12, 13. *Ezek* 33. 11. *Mat.* 23. 37, 38. *Luke* 19. 41, 42.

*Secondly*, God hath given Infal-  
lible Testimony, of his unfeigned  
desire of the Salvation of every of  
his Creatures, in that he hath gi-  
ven his Son to shed his Precious  
blood for every one of them; As  
the *Apostle* argues *Rom.* 8. 32. Now  
that *Christ* Died for all Men Uni-  
versally, is with the greatest evi-  
dence imaginable, made manifest in  
the Scripture. The Tongue of Men  
or Angels cannot possibly declare any  
Matter,

Matte  
preffi  
the  
exte  
Wor  
sal  
of a  
By  
He  
He  
sa  
in  
fl  
S  
a

idably Matter, with more Universal Ex-  
 what pteffions, than is made use of by  
 preff the Spirit of God, to set forth the  
 cious extent of his Sons Death for the  
 uine. World. As First, By an Univer-  
 re e- sal Collective. *He is the Saviour*  
 ally of all Men, 1 Tim. 4. 10. Secondly,  
 n of By an Universal Distributive.  
 now He tasted Death for every Man,  
 E. Heb. 2. 9. Thirdly, By an Univer-  
 it- sal Affirmative or Express, and that  
 ese in opposition to a particular In-  
 s, stance. *He is the Propitiation for our*  
 Sins, and not for our Sins only, but  
 also for the Sins of the whole World;  
 1 John 2. 2. Fourthly, By an U-  
 niversal Negative. He is not willing  
 that any should Perish. 2 Pet. 3. 9.  
 Fifthly, By an Universal Command.  
 He commands all Men, every where,  
 to repent. Sixthly and Lastly, By  
 Universal Promises and Threatnings.  
 John 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, &c. So  
 that whosoever denies this Truth,  
 speaks as much in Contradiction  
 to the Word of God: as 'tis possi-  
 ble for any Man to oppose any  
 Truth withal. Universal Creati-

on, is not asserted to us in Scripture, by so great a Variety of Expression, as is *Universal* Redemption; and upon the same Terms we disbelieve God in this, we may disbelieve him in every thing he says. I might further demonstrate this Truth, by a multitude of *Arguments*; but I shall content my self, with the *Four* following, the *First* is. *Adam* standing the whole Worlds Representative when he sinned, 'tis unreasonable to suppose, that he did not so stand, when he was redeem'd. Were all Men in him when he fell, and were not all Men in him, when he was restor'd? Was not the *Plaister* as large as the *Wound*? If Reason will bear no sway herein, consult the Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15. 22. *Rom.* 5. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. *Secondly*, *Christ* either Died for all, or his Death was a far greater Curse to the World, than it was a Blessing; for had not *Christ* Died, our first Parents had been immediately sent to the Confines of Eternal Death, & so they had had

had no Race to have succeeded them, and consequently, not having had a Being could never have sinned; and so never have suffer'd Eternal Torments. But now by the Mediation of *Jesus*, these Criminals are not only pardon'd themselves, but permitted to bring forth a Numerous *Off-spring*, of which by our Opponents Doctrine, the far greater Part, it may be a Thousand to One, are by the implacable Hatred of God, left Irreversibly to Sin and Suffer his Insupportable Wrath to Eternal Ages. So that this Notion, doth with most manifest clearness, totally subvert the Work of Redemption, and renders it the most cruel of Undertakings, so that we may safely hence invert the Words of our Saviour, *John* 1. 16. and read them thus, God so hated the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that so Millions of Millions of Poor Souls, (which never else had been) might be brought into Being, and so necessitated to Sin and Perish, without a possibility of Escape. Too

black a Notion to be cast upon the Father of Lights ; which yet leads me to the Third Argument , which is yet more ( if possible ) convincing. *Christ* must Die for all Men *Universally* , or God must Eternally condemn and punish the greatest Part of Men : for not believing a Lie. For nothing is more plainly revealed in Scripture , than these Two Truths : *First* , That God requires all Men to believe in *Jesus Christ* , and that as their Saviour , or One Dying for their Sins ; *John* 6. 29. & 8. 24. & 10. 42. & 16. 9. &c. *Secondly* , That this is the Ground of Man's Eternal Condemnation , because he doth not , nor will believe in the only begotten Son of God. *John* 3. 18. 38. So that I see not which Way 'tis possible to clear God from such a Dreadful Asper- sion , as before Noted , but by acknowledging the Death of *Christ* , for all Men *Universally*. The *Fourth* and *Last* Argument , is from the Apostle *Paul* , and I hope it will prove Authentick , if the other fail ;  
and



and 'tis from 2 Cor. 5. 14. Where  
 the *Apostle* designing to set forth  
 the Necessity all Men had of a Savi-  
 our, by their being dead in Sins and  
 Trespases, proves it by this To-  
 pick or Medium, to wit, the Univer-  
 sality of *Christ's* Death for all men;  
 for his Argument runs thus, If One  
 Died for all, then were all Dead.  
 Now sure none will affirm the *Apostle*  
 so Unskilful or Deceitful a *Logician*,  
 as to lay down a False and Imper-  
 fect Premise to build his Conclusion  
 upon; for all (e're a whit) skill'd in  
 Argument, know, that the Major  
 Proposition must always compre-  
 hend and include the Conclusion,  
 and no doubt the *Corinthians*, they  
 were not such Fools; but they would  
 have reply'd, had they not be-  
 lieved the Truth of the *Apostles*  
 Proposition, Ay Brother *Paul*, we  
 grant if *Christ* had Died for all,  
 they must all have been Dead; but  
 thou knowest, he did not Die for  
 all, therefore what doth thy Argu-  
 ing prove. But having been some-  
 what large in these foregoing Parti-  
 culars,

culars, I shall be constrained; but to hint at the following things in Order to contain all I shall say at present within my designed Confines.

*Thirdly*, All the Commands God hath given forth to be observed by all men, plainly bespeaks his unfeigned desire of their Salvation. For they declare, that God would have all his Creatures obey them, and why would he have them obeyed, if not for their Sakes, and that for their good? For, he hath no need of Man's Service: Seriously peruse these Scriptures, *Deut. 5. 29.* and *6. 17, 18, 24,* and *11. 26,* *Rev. 22. 14.* *Job 22. 2, 3.*

*Fourthly*, All the Promises and Threatnings published in Gods Word, declare this Truth; For, for what End are they there Recorded, but to excite men to Obedience, and deter men from Sin? See *Psal. 1. 1.* *Psal. 128. 1.* *Deut. 30. 16, 17, 18,* & *Prov. 2. 34, 35, 36.* *Rom. 2. 8, 9.* And if God would not have any men to Sin, then he would not have any men.

men to suffer; for Sin is the alone Cause of any Man's Infelicity; *Psal.* 107. 17. *Rom.* 6. 23.

*Fifthly*, All the outward Acts of God's Providence in the World, whether of Mercies or Judgement, plainly Preach the same Doctrine. He draws and drives, by these Cords of his Love. See *Job* 9. 17, 18, and 33. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. *Psal.* 8. 4. *Psal.* 145. 9. 16. *Acts* 14. 17. *Rom.* 2. 5. 2 *Pet.* 3. 15, &c.

*Sixthly*, The Eternal Rewards and Punishments, which God will bestow and inflict at last on men; plainly declare they had a Time, and means of Grace afforded them, to mind the things of their Eternal Peace, and consequently, that God did unfeignedly desire their Salvation. See 2 *Thes.* 1. 8. *Jude* 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10, 11.

*7thly*. The Commissions that God hath given to the Ministers of the Gospel, do likewise join Testimony to this Truth, otherwise they are bound to tell Lies in the Name of God. See *Ezek.* 3. 18, 19, 20, &c. and

and 33. 6, 7, 8, 9, &c. *Mark* 16. 15. *2 Cor.* 5. 18, 19, 20.

*Eighthly and Lastly*, The firings of the Spirit of God, upon the Hearts of every Creature, plainly bespeaks the unfeigned desire he hath of their Salvation, unless we can imagine God solicitous, and active about that, which he hath no desire to accomplish ( which one would think ) any Rational Creature should dread to assert. No, God never affords any means, in order to effect any End; but he always affords sufficient to accomplish the same. Consider the following Scriptures, *Psal.* 24. 7, 8. *Isa.* 53. 10. *Acts* 7. 51. *Rev.* 3. 20, and *Gen.* 6. 3. compared with *1 Pet.* 3. 18, 19, 20. Thus having finished my first Head, I shall proceed to what follows. But I would first remove an Objection, which is always ready at hand to oppose this Truth withal. Say some, *If God doth unfeignedly desire the Salvation of all Men, how comes it to pass all Men are not saved.*

*Reply,*

Reply, The Answer is easie and ready. Because the impure Will of degenerated Man is opposite to the Pure and Holy Will of God; so that what the Will of God desireth, the Will of Man opposeth; and this is none other Doctrine then is plentifully revealed in the Scriptures; 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. Prov. 1. 22, to 30. Jer. 15, 18, and 51. 9. Ezek. 24. 13. Mat. 27, 37, 38. John 5. 40. But to help the meanest Understanding, God wills the Salvation of every of Mankind, but then it is only in his own Way; or on the Terms of his own Proposing. And the Infinite Perfections of God's Nature, do (as it were) set to himself Bounds, which he cannot pass. So that what God proposeth concerning his Vineyard. Isa. 5. 3, 4. is truly applicable to the Vineyard of the whole World, that is, what could have been done more for it, that he hath not done; the Meaning is not, that with the Respect to the Power of God, nothing more could have been done, but God's Power being limited by

by his *Will*, and his *Will* being guided by his *Wisdom*, and his *Wisdom* directing consonant to all the *Perfections* of his *Nature*; it follows, that what is *possible* to his *Power*, may be *repugnant* to his *Wisdom* and *Holiness*; and so on that Consideration, cannot be done by him. The *Almightiness* of his *Power*, is always, and only put forth with *judgement*; *Psal.* 99. 4. So that (tho') respecting the *Power* of God *distinctly* or *seperately* considered, he could have forc'd all his *Creatures* into an *Universal* Obedience to him, and given to them *Eternal* weights of *Glo-ry*, yet considered, as a God *Infinite* in *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, &c. as well as *Power*, it may be truly affirmed of him, That he could not *save* one *Soul* more than he hath done. And I Retort upon my *Adversaries*, by this *Interogation*, is it not every whit as *Rational* to conclude, God cannot convert any more men than he doth, because they are not converted, as 'tis to say, he was not willing to *save* any more than he doth, because they

they are not saved? But as none will assert the Former, but on the Fore-mentioned Consideration, so in like manner, I assent to the Later, upon a due Interpretation. For as hath been already hinted, tho' it was the Original and antecedent Will of God, that all men should be saved, yet it was as really and truly his Secondary or Consequent Will, that every Impenitent, Unbelieving, and Unpersuadable Sinner should be damned. So that, tho' the Will of God was frustrated in the Former yet it was accomplished in the Later, and it was impossible it could be so in both: besides, God's main Design, to wit, his own Glory, is as truly effected, in the Sinner's Condemnation, as it would have been in his Justification and Salvation. I might enlarge, but I hasten to the Second Head, wherein I hope yet farther to convince the Truth, for which, I have been Pleading. I then advance to declare (according to the Guidance of Scripture Light) what are the Methods, which God hath ordained

to effect the *Eternal Felicity* of these his Offspring by. And here I shall divide them into Two Parts, First, Such as have a Peculiar and singular Respect unto God himself, ( that is ) what he hath done, and will do on his Part, in order to bring every Son and Daughter of Adam to *Eternal Felicity*. And Secondly, What he hath Indispensibly ordained for Man to do ( on his Part ) in order to effect the same. And here, notwithstanding the Copiousness of the Subject, I intend to confine myself ( at least for present ) in the few following Pages, not pretending to speak all, that may or can be said thereon; but so much, as I conceive ( by the Blessing of God ) may lead every Willing and Rational Mind, so far into the Knowledge of Gods Will and their Duty therein; as that no Soul making a due Improvement thereof, need ever miscarry as to its *Eternal Concerns*.

It may not be unnecessary, as to the first of these, that we shew, what God did for Man, at his first Creation, in order to secure his *Eternal*



these shall first, particular is) his and felicity do the things in- for a- l, ; he l- o r - l  
 eternal Felicity. And here we find, God created him a Pure and Innocent Creature, invested him with many Noble Endowments, especially, Knowledge and Holiness. Enters into a Covenant of Life and Peace with him, and his Posterity in him: And this Covenant comprehended the Law of the Ten Commandments, as a Rule, Boundary, and Conveyance of Life and Blessing. For had Man observed the same, according to the Will of his Maker, and the Capacities he was created with by him, he had never tasted the least Infelicity or Misery; but have for ever enjoy'd sweet Fellowship and Communion with his Maker; but to the Eternal Reproach and Shame of himself and his Off-spring, he soon broke Covenant with God, and so forfeited all his Blessings, yea, procured to himself and all his Off-spring Eternal Wrath and Misery; Gen. 1. 26. Col. 3. 10. Rom. 3. 19. and 7, 10. Cor. 15. 56. Gal. 3. 10, 12. Psal. 75. 3, &c. But this being a Doctrine generally

ly believ'd, and largely Treated on by many *Worthies*, I proceed.

This *then* being the *Case* of our first *Parents*, and is the *Case* of every one of us by *Nature*; God in further *Demonstration* of his real *Delight* in, and *unfeigned* desire after, the *Eternal Felicity* of every one of his *Off-spring* Man; out of the *Unsearchable* Treasures of his *Grace*, takes *Pitty* on *them*, *Contrives*, *finds out*, and *accomplisheth* a *way* and *Means*, by which we are *redeem'd*, *restored*, and *reinvested* with the *Enjoyments* of his special *Favour* and *Blessing*; and by which we may be *Eternally Happy*, in the *never ceasing Enjoyments* thereof. Now, what God hath done for all the *Off-spring* of *Adam* on this *Account*, and what he requires to be done by *them*, in order to compleat the *same*, I shall further proceed to shew. And here *First* *Negatively*, what God doth not do? ( *in Opposition to the Pretensions or Fancies of some* ) *Viz.* God doth not act in any *meer Arbitrary*, or *Irresistible Way* and *Manner*: So as

to

to make his *Creature* Happy, *volens* *volens*; whether they will or no. See *Gen.* 6. 3. *2 Chron.* 14, 15, 16. *Psal.* 81. 12. *Isa.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Ezek.* 24. 13. *ally.* Affirmatively, and here,

*First*, God hath contrived, ordered, made plain and *Publick*, whatsoever is *Necessary* on this *Account*. He hath not laid, nor left *Man* under any *Care* or *Concern*, to contrive and find out a *Way* to recover and *Relieve* himself. He hath made it only the *Concern* of his *Creature*, to walk in the *Way* prescribed and appointed for him. See *1 Sam.* 14. 14. *Tit.* 2. 10. *John* 14. 6.

*Secondly*, And more *Particular*ly, God has provided a *Ransom*, a *Mediator* or *Peace-maker* between *God* and *Man*; he hath given and sent forth his only begotten *Son* into the *World*, to take upon him our *Nature*, and therein our *Sin* and *Punishment*, who likewise *Freely*, *Fully*, and *Actually* performed and *Completed* the same: by bearing the heavy *Wrath* and *Curse* of *God*,

for us and in our stead , and thereby *Rescuing* God and Man again together. See *Gen.* 3. 5. *2 Sam.* 14. 14. *Gal.* 3. 13. *1 Cor.* 15. 22. *Rom.* 5. 14, 15, 16, &c. *2 Cor.* 5. 19. *1 John* 2, 2. *1 Tim.* 2. 5. *Dan.* 9. 24. *Isa.* 53. 5, 6. *John* 1. 29.

Thirdly, God hath proposed *Faith* in his Son , or the *Promises* of his *Grace* in and through him ; as the *One* and only *Duty*, of every *Person*, that is arrived to the *Years* of *Discretion*, and have committed actual *Sin* against God , to be performed on *Man's* Part , in order to his perfect *Deliverance* from *Sin* and *Misery*, and procure him *Justification* and *Peace* with God. *Mark* 16, 16. *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 3. 26. and 5. 1. And thus *Faith* ( which if unfeigned ) comprehends all *Christian* Duties , as sincere *Repentance*, *Mortification* of *Sin*, and *Sanctification*, or *Newness* of *Life*, *Acts* 5. 9. *Gal.* 5, 6. By *Faith* we lay hold on *Eternal Life*, enter into a *Real*, *Actual*, and *Solemn Covenant* with God , become *Betroathed* and *Esoused*, to  
Father ,

Fat  
ver  
3.  
2  
an  
see  
is  
lie  
th

*Father , Son and Spirit , in an Everlasting Covenant ; John 1. 12. Gal. 3. 26. But it may be here further Queried , how shall fallen Man beget and compleat this Grace in his Soul , seeing the Scripture tells us, Faith is the Gift of God, and no one can believe but such , to whom it is given them of God ; Ephes. 2. 8. John 15. 5.*

*Reply , 'Tis true, wherefore I grant the Solution of this Question is of great Importance , and needs the Guidance and Assistance of God's Word and Spirit ; the which I crave, and doubt not of its Aid herein , and in the Resolution hereof , I intend to conclude. Wherefore , First, I would premise , or lay down this Position , Viz. That God doth really give true Faith unto all Men, that arrive to Years of Discretion. But here I must explain myself , for my Meaning is , God gives it to every Man , in the Use of Means only. There is no One Soul under the whole Heavens , which is not by the Supernatural enlightenings of God's Grace , lead unto such a Faith as will*

will please God. To wit, a *Belief* that God is, and that he is the *Rewarder* of them that diligently seek him; *Heb.* 11. 6. *Rom.* 1. 19, 20. and 2. 15, 16, and 15. 6, 7, 8. 18. *Acts* 14. 17. and 17. 26, 27, 28. God is said to do that which is never done; for as much as he did all that was proper for him to do in order to effect it; *Ezek.* 24. 13. God is never said to do any thing, wherein he himself is singly concern'd. and yet the *Thing* never done. 'Tis not meet God should lose the *Glory* of his *Acts*, because *Man* falls short in his *Duty*. In like manner, 'tis not meet God should lose the *Glory* of his *Goodness*, in giving *Eternal Life* to men, because they will not accept of it. He may be truly said to give a *Thing*, that sincerely offers it, whether it be accepted or no. In this Sense, God gives *Eternal Life* to all men, and *Faith* as One necessary *Ingredient* to bring men thereunto. This is plainly declared by the *Apostle*, *Acts* 17. 30, 31. Where, all men every where  
are

are commanded to repent ( which includes Faith ) and assures us , God hath given assurance ( our Translation reads it but more significantly as the *Margine* or *Original* imports, hath offer'd or given Faith ) unto all Men , by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead So hat now I proceed to declare. What God hath done on his Part, to beget Faith in the Souls of every Son and Daughter of Man, and what he expects Man should do on his Part , in order to compleat the same. And to the First,

( 1. ) God of the Riches of his Grace , through the Mediation of Jesus , doth infuse into the Soul of every Creature , a Power or Capacity of Believing , and this is apparent , ( 1. ) Because 'tis evident Man hath his Being of Grace given and continued to him ; *Psal.* 75. 3. and 'tis Irrational to suppose, that God hath not given to men Powers and Capacities suitable to their Being. ( 2. ) The Scripture testifieth a compleat Renovation by Jesus Christ , of whatever Man lost in Adam ; *Rom.* 5. 14 , 15 , 16 , 17 ,

18. & 8. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. and consequently a Power and Capacity of Believing. ( 3. ) 'Tis testified concerning Christ, John 1. 8. That he enlightens every one that cometh into the World. There is a Spirit in every Man, and the Inspiration of Supernatural Grace giveth him Understanding, and with the Understanding or Heart Man believeth unto Salvation; Job 32. 8. Rom. 10. 10. The Spirit of Man is the Candle of the Lord; Prov. 20. 27. And can any think, God hath any useles Candles, such as he never lighteth, ( 4. ) The many Commands, Promises, and Threatnings, which God hath given forth in his Word, requiring all men every where to believe, plainly demonstrate that men are some way or other (and I know of none but by Grace) in a Capacity of believing. ( 5. ) Several things are done by the Appointment of God, that so all men might believe; John 1. 7. & 17. 21. & 30, 31. And he appoints nor approves of any fruitless Labour. ( 6. ) 'Tis Sin in every

ONE



one not to believe; *John* 16. 9. Which it could not be, were not every one in a Capacity of Believing; Faith (*i. e.* in a *Messias*) being not an Old, but New Covenant Duty. (7) Our Blessed Saviour is said to marvel at the Faith of some, and Unbelief of others; *Mat.* 8. 10. & *Mark* 6. 6. Which declares at least, the Capacity all men are put into to believe. (8) 'Tis said, *Luke* 8. 12. That the Devil takes away the Word from some, lest they should believe, which plainly implies, the Devil was sensible they were in a Capacity of Believing. (9) Our Blessed Saviour, who certainly never upbraided any Man without a Cause, yet is said to upbraid some men for their *Impenitence* and *Unbelief*; *Mat.* 11. 20. *Mark* 16. 14. Which plainly intimateth men may have, yea, have by *Grace*, *Power*, and *Capacity* given them of God to repent and believe, who notwithstanding, yet continue *Impenitent* and *Unbelieving*. So that I refer my Reader for a Conclusion of this Head, to the *Apostles*

Words ; Rom. 3. 3 , 4. and pass  
wherefore.

( 2 ) God not only of his Grace , in-  
fuseth into his Creatures a Power and  
Capacity of Believing , but proposeth  
proper Objects to exercise Faith upon ,  
or beget Faith in the Soul : As the  
Riches of his Grace , the Death  
of his Son , the faithfulness of  
his Word , Promise , Oath , &c.  
John 3. 14 , 15 , 16. 1 Pet. 1. 17 ,  
18 , 19 , 20 , 21. Mark 16. 16 , &c.  
Heb. 6. 17 , 18 , 19.

( 3 ) God of his Grace , by his Word  
and Ministers , maketh use of most  
Proper and Rational Arguments to  
convince the Understanding of every  
Reasonable Soul , of the Necessity and  
Equity of their Duty ; Isa. 1. 18. &  
5. 4. Deut. 32. 47. Psal. 4. 2 , 4.  
Prov. 5. 1 , 2. 7. 11 , 12 , 13 , &c.  
John 12. 35. 1 John 5. 4 , to 14. So  
that it may be truly said , 'tis the  
most unreasonable thing in the  
World , not to believe the Record  
God hath given of his Son , 2 Thes. 3. 2.

( 4 ) God of his Grace , by his  
Word and Ministers , and constant ,  
and

and common *Providences*, make<sup>s</sup> use of the most Powerful and Attracting *Allectives*, to allure and draw the Affections of every of his *Creatures*, that so they may repent and believe the Gospel; *Deut.* 5. 29. & 32. 29. *Mat.* 23. 37. *Luke* 19. 41, 42. *Isa.* 55. 1, 2. *Rev.* 22. 17, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. 2 *Pet.* 3. 15. And when the Cords of his Love will not draw us, he useth Cords in Love to drive us. He sends his Terroures to awaken us, and his Rod to heal us; *Job* 33. 14, to 30. *Prov.* 29. 15. *Micah* 6. 9. He sends his Judgements into the Earth, that the Inhabitants thereof may learn Righteousness; *Isa.* 26. 9. He puts a Price of Infinite value into his Creatures Hands; *Prov.* 17. 16. He is unto them as they that take the Yoke from off the Jaws, and lays Meat unto them, yet notwithstanding, they must eat or Perish. Thus he draws them with the Cords of a Man, and with the Bonds of Love; *Hosea* 11. 3, 4, 5. And seems passionately concern'd when this his Grace is abused; *Micah* 6. 1, 2, 3. &c.

(5) God of his Grace, sends his Holy Spirit, to the Doors of his Creatures Hearts, and he comes not empty Handed, or narrow Hearted. He cries, Open ye Everlasting Doors, that the King of Glory may come in. He Knocks at the Doors of the Hearts of Sinners, but he doth it not, as some will do at their Friends or Neighbours Doors; very softly on purpose they might not be heard, only that they might have excuse to say, that they were there. No; he knocks in good Earnest, and with Authority, yea, he commands Entrance, Cries out *Fire, Fire*, yea, tells them they shall for ever burn in unquenchable *Fire*, if they will not awake, and arise, &c. Promises them Eternal Rewards, if that they will but let him come in and Sup with them, &c. *John 16. 9. Psal. 24. 7. 9. Rev. 3. 20.* Yea, he takes not a speedy Denial, is not as Proud as we are Coy; but waits, till his Locks are (as it were) Wet with the Dew of the Night. He waits long, on some, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 Years and more. Coming

ing and knocking again, and again, Crying out with most melting Expressions, *How long, how long, how long, Ye Simple. will ye love Simplicity? Ye Scorners delight in your Scorning, and ye Fools hate Knowledge? Turn ye at my Reproof, and I will pour out my Spirit unto you, and make known my Words unto you; Prov. 1. 22, 23. Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Ezek. 33. 11.* Now can any Soul be so destitute of Reason and Grace, as to think all this is nothing but a *Pack of Deceit and Falsehood*. Imagine the Spirit of God thus Striving for Victory, but with no Design to conquer. Dare any resent the most upright Being, comparable to the vilest of *Hyocrites*? Such whose Words of their Mouths are smoother than Butter, whilst War is in their Hearts; *Psal. 55. 21. Prov. 12. 10.* For such must all these Dealings of God be with Men, if he designs not their Salvation by them.

( 6 ) an everlastly, God of his Grace, in and by our Lord Jesus, stands always ready to lend his Helping Hand.

*whenever the Soul of any Sinner shall  
 move one Step forward in the Way  
 of Believing. We grant the Duties  
 of Religion are great and Weighty,  
 and require more Strength to man-  
 nage, than Sinners either have  
 of themselves, or immediately have  
 from God; but he whose Eyes run to  
 and fro, throughout the whole Earth,  
 beholds the Motions and Inclinations  
 of the Hearts of every Creature. And  
 no sooner doth the Soul of any Pro-  
 digal Sinner, come to its self, and  
 entertain any serious thought of Re-  
 turning unto his Maker, but this Fa-  
 ther of Mercy not only runs to meet  
 him, but is at hand to Aid and En-  
 courage him. Much like a Loving  
 and Tender Parent, who may put  
 his Child upon lifting an Hundred  
 Pound Weight, which notwithstanding,  
 he knows it cannot do it of  
 its self; yet the Child being willing  
 to try its Strength, and shew its  
 Willingness to obey its Parent, the  
 Father to encourage it, lends his  
 Helping Hand, and <sup>now</sup> both lifting  
 together, it is enabled <sup>now</sup> to do that,  
 which*

which otherwise it could not possibly have done. *'Tis easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, then for a Rich Man (yea, or a Poor Man, or indeed any Man, by his own Natural Skill, Will, or Power) to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. But what is impossible with Men, is possible unto God; Mark 10. 27.* So that Rich and Poor may all enter in at Heavens Gate, if they will implore and improve the Divine Aids of Grace, which either they have, or may have at his Hands. God deals with his Creature Man, much like a Prudent Parent with his Bankrupt Son; who having squandered away a large Stock, will yet try him again, but with a little Stock at first; yet withal promises him, in case he improves and manages that well, he shall have more, and more, still as his Occasions requires: bids him come to him (on those Terms) as often as he please, and he will not send him empty away. In like manner, God hath dealt with his Bankrupt Offspring Man, he re-

B 5

solves

solves to try him yet Once more ,  
 hath provided a *Stock* for him, no  
 ways interiour, but much larger  
 than what he had before ; but he  
 will not now put it all into his Crea-  
 tures Hands at Once, he will have  
 the keeping of it himself, and see  
 or know of the laying of it out. He  
 gives him a little at first (*yet suffici-  
 ent for his need*) tells him, if he im-  
 proves and manages that well, he  
 shall have more ; but lets him know,  
 he must come to him for it ; and  
 tell him for what he wants it ; &c.  
 And so doing (*in the well manage-  
 ment thereof*) he promises to give  
 supplies of Grace, in all things suit-  
 able to his Need. Is not then the  
*Case of Man by Grace*, much bet-  
 ter than it was by *Nature* ? Is it not  
 better to have such a *Friend* and  
*Father*, to go to at all times as our  
 Need requires, than to have all our  
*Stock* in our own *Hands*. Yet such a  
*Friend* and *Father*, hath every *Man*  
 and *Woman* in the World ; but ei-  
 ther they do not know it, or will  
 not believe it, or knowing and be-  
 lieving



lieving it, will not practically improve this their Knowledge, to the *Glory* of their *Maker*, and their own *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Advantage. If any question the Truth hereof, let them search the *Scriptures*, it is so visible throughout the whole of them, that he that runs may read it; yet I shall cite a few of such as occur to Mind; *Psal.* 75. 1. 119. & 151. & 145. 18. *Isa.* 55. 6. *Luke* 15. 17, 18, 19. *Mat.* 11. 28. *Rom.* 9. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Mark* 10. 27, 28. *Heb.* 7: 25. So that as God begins a good Work, in the Soul of every Creature ( by the Communications of Divine Grace ) he will carry on that Work ( on his Part, and in his Way ) unto the Day of Christ. God ever did, doth, and will give to every Man, a sufficiency of *Light* and *Grace* to carry him to Happiness, ( in case he improves it ) and this Irresistibly, whether he will or no; but he never will'd to carry on this Work of his Grace unto Perfection: but by the concurrence of the Will and Power ( or putting forth of the same

same into Act) of his Creature,  
 suitable to the Capacities, which  
 they have of Free Grace, received in  
 order thereunto. The *first* Acts of  
 God's Grace or Gifts of his Love to  
 Fallen Men, are purely in a Way  
 of Grace, without any Respect to  
 any thing Lovely in the Creature,  
 for his Son's sake; but all the *After*  
*Gifts* of God are purely in a Way  
 of Reward, to the well Improve-  
 ment of his *first* Gifts, and the well  
 Managery of Succeeding Ones; yet  
 must we not esteem this any other  
 than a Reward of Grace, not a Re-  
 ward of Debt. See *Phil.* 2. 12, 13.  
*Rom.* 4. 3, 4, 5. Thus having brief-  
 ly finished, what I conceive necessa-  
 ry at present to shew, what God  
 on his Part doth do, and will do to  
 beget and carry on a Saving Faith  
 in the Hearts of every Creature,  
 I now proceed briefly to declare  
 what God hath ordained Man to do  
 (on his Part) *in order to secure his*  
*Eternal Happiness*: And notwith-  
 standing the Duties are great and  
 Weighty (as before noted) yet all  
 things

things considered, they are as nothing, being Infinitely beneath the things which God hath done for us, to procure and secure the said Felicity. The *Afflictions* of this present *Life* ( the most difficult part of our Duty to God ) are in the *Apostle's* Judgment, *not worthy to be compared to the Glory that is to be revealed*: All that God requires of us, is but to make use of what he gives, and accept of what he offers. 'Tis but to believe what he says, and obey what he commands, and as he proposeth nothing but Truth to be believed, so he requireth nothing but what is for our Good, Profit, Honour, and Pleasure; to be obeyed. He is no hard Master, he is not morose or difficult to be pleased; if *their be first a Willing Mind, he accepteth according to what a Man hath, and exacteth not, what he hath not*; he is not Cruel in his Laws, nor Niggardly in his Aids; if we believe and obey him, we shall spend our Days in Pleasures; Job 36. 11. All the Senses and Faculties of our bodies

dies and Souls shall be sweetly satisfied, yea ravished; with most proper Objects for Delight and Pleasure. Had God commanded us to live upon nothing but *Bread and Water*: yea, to eat and drink always that which were most *distastful* to our *Appetites*. Had he commanded us to cloath our selves with Crowns of Thorns, and Garments of Thistles, to tread bare-foot upon Brambles, or Red Hot Bars of Iron; to lead a life of the most exquisite miseries and Torments, that could be inflicted or endured in this World. We had been bound to obey him, and admired he would have rewarded a short Life of such Sorrows and Miseries ( which we had Justly merited ) with never ceasing Weights of Glory; but this is not our Case, we are only required to walk in Pleasant and Peaceful Paths, *with assurance that we shall meet with no Harm, nor want any thing that is good for us therein.* That we shall gain more by one Minutes true Service of God, than we can gain in a Thousand Years, in the  
 Serving

Serving of our selves in this World  
 seperate from the Service of God:  
 Yea, tho' God should bleis us with  
 the Confluence of all Earthly Bless-  
 ings, above the ordinary Method  
 of his Providence all that time. Men  
 little think what Enemies and Rob-  
 bers they are to themselves, whilst  
 they say unto God ( tho' it be but  
 in the Language of Practice ) *Depart*  
*from us, we desire not the Knowledge*  
*of thy Ways ; for following after their*  
*present Profits, Honours or Pleasures ;*  
*these Lying Vanities, they forsake their*  
*own Mercies. For if a Cup of Cold*  
*Water given to a Disciple of Christ*  
 ( from a right Principle, and to a  
 right End ) shall not lose its Reward,  
*Viz.* a Particular and Eternal Re-  
 ward in Heaven for it; Oh how  
 great ! How Inconceivably great,  
 is the Loss which every Man sustains,  
 whilst he is not in the true Ser-  
 vice of God. Surely it must be the  
 most Incredible Madness, the first  
 born of Folly, to neglect our Duty  
 and Interest here. Wherefore in  
 hopes that some Soul or other, *will*  
*mind*

*mind what 'tis the Lord his God doth require of him*, I proceed to inform him in the few following Particulars.

(1) *God doth Indispensibly require that we employ, or set apart, a Portion of our time every Day to think of Heaven and Heavenly things. That so we may acquaint our selves with our selves, and with our Maker; to Examine, Ponder, Weigh, Consider and Determine, how Matters stand, between God and us. Peruse these Scriptures, Deut. 4. 39, 40. & 5. 29. & 8. 5. & 32. 29. 1 Sam. 12. 24. Job 34. 27. Psal. 1. 2. & 10. 4. & 32. 9. & 50, 22. Prov. 6. 6. Eccles. 5. 1. & 7. 13, 14. Isa. 1. 3. & 5. 12. Jer. 8. 6. Ezek 12. 3. & 18. 14. 28. Hos. 7. 2. Hag. 1. 5. 7. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Phil. 4. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 13. 15. No Duty more pressed in Scripture. Consideration is the first Step to any Worthy Enterprize; Luke 14. 28. to 33. and it implies not a Slight, Superficial, or Transient View of things in our Mind; but a Serious, Settled, Upright and Impartial Examining, Trying, Judging, Sentencing*

tencing of them. *It signifies laying of Matters close to our Hearts, or our Hearts and Ways close together; as it is Translated, Eccles. 7. 2. It was by Inadvertency, or for want of due Consideration, in our first Parents, that Sin and Misery came into the World; and it must be by the due Exercise of our thinking Faculty, if ever we come to be really restored to Life and Peace; Ezek. 18. 28. Wherefore it is necessary, that we set apart some time every Day (if be but a Quarter of an Hour) retiredly to converse about the Matters of our God and our Soul; and you need not want Matter for Consideration, God and the things of God and our Souls, are not only an Unsearchable Deep, but stored with Variety of Soul Charming, and Soul Satisfying Objects. Compare things and things together, ask your Souls these and such like Questions. Hath God given me my Being? And is it not meet that my Being be devoted unto his Honour? Cannot I live or continue in Being One Moment without God? Why*

*Why then should I live One Moment but to God? Is all I have and Enjoy from God? And shall not all I have and Enjoy, be employed for God? How Surpassingly Vile and Incongruous to Common Reason, must then that be, to employ God's Blessings and Favours to his Dishonour. 'Tis as if a Friend should lend me his Sword to defend me from my Enemy, and I should Sheath it in his own Bowels. Most Horrid Ingratitude! and yet such is the Case of every Wilful and Obstinate Sinner. Every Sin is a Vertual Murder of God, for in every such Act by the Language of Practice we say, We would not have God to be, because he controuls us in our Will. Ask thy Soul then, is Sin a Reasonable or Unreasonable thing? Can I serve a better Lord and Master than my Maker? Which had I better serve God or the Devil? ( I know of no Medium ) Whether an Holy and Pious, or a Debaucht and Wicked Life be the most Amiable? To act like a Rational or a Bruit Creature most becoming? Whether is Heaven or Hell,*  
*the*



*the best Habitation to take up with-  
al for an Eternal Abode? Surely  
any Rational Understanding need  
not be long resolving these and such  
like Questions, where there is so  
Vast a Disproportion. Having  
thus alarm'd thy Soul, and awak-  
ened it, proceed yet further to make  
Enquiry, How the Case stands with  
thy own Soul? Call it to an Account.  
Say, O my Soul, whence camest thou?  
Who gave thee thy Being? Where and  
What hast thou been? what hast thou  
done? What hast thou received?  
What Returns hast thou made? What  
Improvements? What Loss, or what  
Gain? How hath thy Time, thy  
Health, thy Strength, thy Reason  
and Understanding, and all the Fa-  
culties and Powers, with which thou  
art entrusted, been employed? Cast  
up thy Receipts, Debts, Payments,  
see if thou canst tell what thou hast  
run upon the Score. Think how  
you will be able to answer your Judge  
at the great Tribunal, what will  
be his Final Sentence; and take  
with you the Holy Scriptures, that  
Book*

*Book of Life*, by which you must be Judged; remember what hath been told you, *God is a God of all Perfection*, a God of Truth and Justice, as well as Clemency and Goodness; wherefore, whatever he hath declared in his Word, he will fulfil to a Tittle. *The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God*; Psal. 9. 17. *He'll pour out his Wrath upon the Heathen, and all the Families of the Earth, that call not on his Name*; Jer. 10. 25. And how men should do otherwise than forget God, and neglect to call upon his Name, who will not Seriously take Matters into Consideration, is undeterminable by Humane Reason. Wherefore, take these things now into your Consideration. 'Tis Infinitely better to see and know thy Case now, than to put it off till the Day of Judgement. 'Tis better to come to a Reckoning now, than to let it alone till then. Now if thou hast run upon the Score more than thou art able to pay, more than thou art worth,

or

or all the World beside (as no doubt but thou hast) yet now thou mayst, by Sincere Repentance, and Faith in our *Lord Jesus*, sue out and obtain a Pardon, but thou canst not do it, when once thine Eyes are closed, and there is a Separation made between thy Soul and Body; *Ecles. 9. 10.* Thus in due Examination and expostulation with thy own Soul. Thou wilt be (as it were) by hand lead, to fix upon some choice, come to some purpose and Resolve. You may see what the Prodigal did, when he came to himself, that is, when he call'd home his Roving, Wandering thoughts, and falls upon a serious Treaty with his own Heart, he soon came to this Resolve. *I will arise and go to my Father*, I now am in Want and Penury, I there shall be supply'd, this also if rightly prosecuted, will induce and ingage thee to do the same, and consequently puts thee upon falling in with that, which as a Second Step to the Security of thy Eternal Peace, I, by the Guidance of Gods Word,

Word , am lead to direct thee unto :  
Wherefore ,

( 2 ) God expects , thou seeing  
thy Misery , wilt make Application  
to him, requires it at thy Hand. *'Tis  
a small Favour is not worth the Ask-  
ing.* He hath bidden you ask , and  
hath promis'd you shall receive.  
He hath provided Pardon of Sin ,  
Justification , Sanctification and E-  
ternal Life , and Glory for you ;  
*but he hath laid it all up in his Son.*  
And except we go to him for these  
Invaluable Treasures , these best of  
blessings , we shall never have  
them , and so shall be never the  
better for them , but much the  
worse ; because they will be as so  
many Weights to sink the Soul  
down to the bottom of the bottom-  
less Pit. See and consider these  
Scriptures , *Isa. 45. 22. Mat. 11. 27.  
John 3. 14 , 15 , 16. Rom. 6. 23. & 8.  
32. 2 Pet. 1. 3. 1 John 5. 11 , Ezek.  
36 , 37. John 5. 40. & 6. 53. Luke  
12. 48. & 10. 15. Rom. 2. 4 , 5.  
Heb. 2. 3.* but have a care you go not  
forth by your own Skill , or in your  
own

own *Strength*. Many a *Soul* hath split it self upon this *Rock*, of self Exaltation. The *Spirit* of God by the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 5. 2. 7. very *Emphatically* sets forth the *Folly* of such an *One*, wherefore when thy *Soul* is alarmed and warmed by the fore-mentioned *Considerations*, as no doubt but it will be, if thy *Meditations* have been serious; *Psal.* 39. 3. & 119. 59, 60. then think not to overcome your *Corruptions*, to resist your *Temptations*, to perform *Religious Duties*, by your own *Skill*, and *Strength*; or that *Will*, *Skill*, and *Strength* you have already received from God; but take the *Advice* already given, and frequently prei'd in the *Scripture*. Go to God by *Prayer*, and *Supplication*, and go in the *Name* of *Jesus*. And for as much as you know not, what to pray for as you ought; *Rom.* 8. 26. beg the *Assistance* and *Teachings* of the *Spirit* of God. If you will but ask it, God hath promised to give it; *Luke* 11. 13. and what may not a *Poor Soul* do, that hath the *Cuidance*, and *Assistance* of

of the Spirit of God. Dost thou want Wisdom, that searcheth the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 10. *That leads into all Truth; John 16. 13.* and consequently, out of all Error. Dost thou want an Heart to Duty the Spirit of God? (by the Word) *Will create a new Heart, and renew a right Spirit within thee; Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27.* Dost thou want Power and Strength to overcome Sin? Vanquish Satan, run in the Way of Gods Commandments. This Spirit will strengthen thee, *with might in thy inward Man; Ephes. 3. 16.* Wherefore go, I say to God, by *Sincere and Earnest Prayer*, and go *Humbly and Sensibly*, from the True Apprehensions of thy own Wants and Misery; and be sure you ask in Faith, nothing wavering; *for he is Faithful that hath promised*, and in so doing, he will not, he cannot deny you; *James 1. 5, 6. Heb. 10. 23. 1 Cor. 1. 20. 1 John 1. 9.* Yea, if thy Heart remains Unbelieving, or thou art weak in thy Faith; pray to God to give thee Faith,

to encrease thy Faith, to help thee against Unbelief; and as nothing is too hard for God to do, so in nothing is he unwilling to do thee good, his Power is not larger than his Goodness, nor his Goodness than his Power, as hath been already shown; wherefore go with an Holy Boldness unto the Throne of Grace for Grace to help you in every time and Case of your Need; Heb. 4. 16. and in so doing, he expects and requires, that you proceed to observe and follow, what in the next Place is proposed unto you, as that which lies on your Part to do, in order to secure your Eternal Happiness, wherefore,

( 3 ) God hath ordained or appointed as your Indispensible Duty, in order to secure your Eternal Peace and Happiness, That you accept and receive from him, what you pray for, and what he offers and tenders to you, above and beyond your expectations and desires; Psal. 81. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, &c. Prov. 1. 3. 24, 25. 30. & 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. & 4. 13. & 8. 10. 33. & 19. 19. John 1. 12. James

1. 21. 2. *Cor.* 11. 4. Is it not most apparently manifest, that no Man perissheth for lack of sufficient supplies provided for him by his Maker, purchased for him by his Redeemer, offered unto him by the *Holy Spirit* his *Sanctifier*. Doth not the *Spirit* and the *Bride*, say come, yea, to whomsoever will, let him come and take of the *Water of Life* freely; *Rev.* 22. 17. and can any Sober, Serious and Thinking Mind, harbour such a thought, as to imagine; that either Father, Son, or Spirit, doth make offers of more than they are able or willing to give? Surely not. No, God in and by his Word, declares himself so solicitous to communicate of the good things of Heaven, Spiritual and Eternal Life and Happiness, to his needy and miserable Creatures, that he stoops below the ordinary Sphear and Method of the most Munificent and Bountiful of Mankind, in the Distribution of them; *Prov.* 9. 1. to 6. *Isa.* 55. 1, 2, 3. he acts as if the Commodities of Heaven were a Drug and Burthen

to



to him, as if the *Bread* and *Water* of *Life*, or the *Banquets* of *Heaven*, were like to be spoil'd for want of *Guests*. But know ye, O ye *Obstinate* and *Ungrateful* *Sinners*, these are only most merciful *Condescensions* in the *God* of *Heaven*, to speak unto you in your own *Dialect*; that so, if by any means, he may prevail upon you, to be *Friends* to your own *Souls*, and not suffer them to perish *Externally*, seeing there is such *Rich* *Provision* made by the *King* of *Heaven* for you. But if you will chuse *Death* rather than *Life*; *Eternal* *Misery*, before *Eternal* *Happiness*, you shall know one day to your never ceasing *Confusion* and *Lamentation*, that the *Blessings* of *Heaven* were no such *inconsiderable* things, as you esteemed them to be. That *God* had no occasion to have been so importune and *Sollicitous*, to have put off the *Commodities* of *Heaven* to you. No, whatsoever *God* doth do of this *Kind*, proceeds alone from the boundless *compassions* of his own *Nature*; being infinitely incli-

ned and propens'd, to relieve his Needy Off-spring. Wherefore, what God doth of this Kind, is only for his Creatures good, he hath no need of them; nor can they be any Advantage or Profit to him: No, no, He is so infinitely happy in himself, that 'tis beyond the Capacities of all his Creatures, by all they can do for or against him, to add to, or diminish ought from, his Essential Glory; Job 22, 23. & 35. 6, 7, 8. Yea, so choice is God of his Heavenly Treasures, that he will not imprudently cast them away, or force them upon any Person ( he is not for casting Pearls to Swine ) Men must ( as hath been already shewn ) return to their Maker, by the exercise of those Noble Endowments and Faculties, which they have receiv'd of Grace; they must consider, repent, return, and humbly implore their Heavenly Father to be merciful unto them, and pardon their Sins, and reconcile them unto himself, in his own Way, and on his own Terms; and having so done, they must not think

think the work is over, No, they must wait at the Gates or Posts of Wisdom, to receive the *Almes* of Heaven. The Wind bloweth when and where it listeth; *John* 3. 8. and as every Mariner must wait upon its motion ( that stands in need thereof ) till it is fair for them, so must every Heaven-bound Soul, that would safely arrive in the *Spiritual Canaan*, ( that Heavenly Countrey ) wait the sweet moving Gales of the Spirit of God blowing upon it; and as no Man ever wanted a fair Wind, at one time or other, to carry him to his desired Port, so no Soul waiting on God, for the supplies of his Grace, shall ever want sufficient for his Need, to carry him to Heaven; but as the Wind will carry no Man to his designed Port, unless he be active, take the Opportunity, and set up his Sails, &c. so no more will the *Gales* of the Spirit of God, carry men to the Heavenly Countrey, unless they fall in with the same, take the Opportunity whil'st it lasteth, receive and imbrace the same. Where-

fore be always in a Waiting Posture, to hear what God shall say, and receive what God shall give, pray, and look after your prayers, pray, and watch unto Prayer; *Psal.* 53. *Ephes.* 6. 18. Pray not as if you cared not whether you were heard or not, nor be so regardless of your prayers, as if you matter'd not whether they were answer'd or not. Do not, as ( it is to be feared ) too many do, pray for Sin-mortifying and Renewing Grace, but with ( a secret reserve, not yet Lord, as *Augustine* confesseth, he himself had used to do, when Praying for the Gift of Continency ) By which means, God is mocked, and the Blessing, when it comes is rejected. We pray to be delivered from all Iniquity, &c. and yet are so in Love with our Sins, or some one Darling Corruption, that totally to depart there-from, we are not willing, we nourish and cherish the same in our Bosom, and perpetrate and prosecute the same in our Lives; the which repells or drives back the Spirit of God from the Soul.

For

For 'tis impossible any beloved, allowed, cherished, and repeated Sin, and the Spirit of God, should dwell together in one and the same Soul; *Psal.* 5. 3. & 68. 18. *Isa.* 59. 2. *Hab.* 1. 13. *2 Tim.* 2. 19. So that this leads me to the next, which is the *Fourth* and *Last* Particular, which I shall lay down, and all which I conceive is absolutely necessary for me to do, in order to give full, plain, and safe directions, as to what lies as an Indispensible Duty on every Son and Daughter of *Adam*, to do on their Part, in order to secure their Eternal Happiness, and the which lies within the compass of their Power to do (as they are restored by Grace) and the which doing, they shall infallibly obtain their desired End. Wherefore, you must not only enter into a Treaty with your own Souls, by serious and timely Consideration; and by the influence thereof, with the *Blessing* of God thereon, humbly return unto your Maker by Sincere Application to him for whatsoever he hath promised

ed., in the unfeigned *Belief* and real *Expectation* thereof; yea, not only wait for, and receive (humbly and thankfully) at the Hands of God, whatsoever he of his Grace, through his Son, communicates to you; but

(4.) and *Lastly*, You must resolve upon, and practically perform a *Mortification* of all your *Corruptions*, a *Departure* from every *Iniquity*, and a living soberly, righteously, and Godlily in this present *World*, by an intire and compleat *clothing* in with, and actual improvement of all the *Teaching*, *Convincing*, *Reproving*, and *Assisting Operations* of the *Grace* of God, by his *Word* and *Spirit*; or any other *Method* of his *Providences*. These *Heavenly Visitants* and *Friends*, you must not only give them *Entrance*, but *kind Entertainment*; and that not as *Transient Guests*, only for a *Night* and away; but as the most *Affectionate Lovers*, resolve to live and die together, take their *Counsel* and *Advice* in all things, and  
yield

yield a ready and hearty consent to whatever they propose unto thee. 'Tis not sufficient to have many Talents, if we hide them in a *Napkin*; no, every one must give an Account of himself to God, and if we are not good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God, which he here communicates to us, we shall be able to give but a very sad account of our selves to him, when all the secrets (as well as visibles) of men shall be judged according to the *Gospel*; seriously peruse these Scriptures, *Mat.* 25. 14. to the End, *1 Cor.* 12. 7. *1 Pet.* 4. 10. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. *Rom.* 2. 6. to the End. The whole Body of the Scriptures is filled with Counsels, Exhortations, and Warnings of this Nature, wherefore peruse them diligently, and let them be as your Intimate Companions and Counsellors at all times; they are the Treasury of all true and Heavenly Wisdom, they are able by the *Blessing* of God upon them (and that none shall want in the upright use of them) to make every Son and

*Daughter of Mankind* wise unto *Salvation*: they are an *Inestimable Jewel* sent from *Heaven*, and as such to be prized and improved by every one, that either hath or can obtain them. They need no *Encomiums* to win our *Esteem*, the Sublime Pleasure, *Profit* and *Honour*, which they confer upon every serious and diligent *Peruser* of them, do infinitely and beyond all compare, declare the *Inestimable Value* of them; wherefore I say, make use of them as such, in the whole Course of your *Conversation*, towards your *God*, your *Neighbour*, and your *Self*; and especially for your help in all the fore-mentioned *Informations* and *Directions*. Thus sincerely observing and practically performing the forementioned *Directions*, I dare be bold on *Gods* behalf, to give thee the *Pledge* of my own *Soul* for *thine*, that *God* will embrace thee in the *Arms* of his most tender *Affection*, and *Entitle* thee to, and *Enrich* thee with the best and highest *Blessings* which *God* can give, or thy *Soul* receive; for when-  
ever



ever any *Soul* thus heartily consents to the Terms of the Covenant of Gods Grace, the Match is made, the Marriage Knot is ty'd; thou art then entred into an Everlasting Covenant with thy Maker: with Father, Son, and Spirit. Thou art become his, and he thine. And this thy Friend, thy Father, thy Husband, will prove faithful unto thee, to thy Death. He that hath compleated this Work in thy Soul to this Degree, will carry it on until the Day of Christ. Thou may'st be as sure of Heaven and Happiness, and Eternal Weights of Glory, as thou art that God is true. He to whom thou art thus united, is both able and willing to defend thee, from all Injury and Harm. *He that is on thy side, is greater, than all that are or can rise up against thee.* So that every such Soul, may Warrantably say, in the Language of the Psalmist, *Jehovah is my Shepherd, my Refuge and Strength; I know, I shall want no good thing* Psal. 23. 1, 2. *I will not fear; tho' I walk through the Valley of the Shadow*

*Shadow of Death: tho' the Earth be removed, and the Mountains carried into the midst of the Sea; Psal. 46.*

I, 2, 3. Yea, tho' all the Men on Earth, and all the Devils in Hell, should combine together, to destroy my Soul, or do me any hurt, yet will I not be terrified at them; I have the Word, yea Covenant Promise of an Almighty and all Faithful Being: One that never did, never will, nor yet ever can break Covenant with his People; Therefore thy main and only Care must be to keep Covenant with him, to keep your selves in the Love of God, to hold fast the beginning of your Confidence steadfast unto the End; for Perseverance, or holding out to the End, in the Way of Piety and Religion, is as absolutely and indispensibly necessary to be performed on thy Part, in order to thy Salvation, or the Eternal Security and Peace of thy Soul, as is any of the fore-mentioned Particulars. Faith is not more necessary to thy justification and Peace with God, than Perseverance or Continuance

ance and Growth therein, is unto thy Salvation. The Scriptures is full of Testimonies in Proof hereof, I shall cite a few of them, 1 Chron. 28. 9. John 8. 31. & 15. 2. to 9. Acts 14. 22. Col. 1. 23. 1 Tim. 2. 13, Heb. 3. 14. & 10. 35, 36. & 12, 13, 14, 15. And what is indispensibly necessary unto Salvation, by the Vote of Gods Word, must needs declare that a Final coming short therein, will cause the Soul to miscarry to all Eternity. 'Tis granted on all hands, that 'tis possible for the Soul, after a real and true Conversion, or Turning to God, yet to fall into many great, grievous, and enormous Sins and so to provoke God thereby, as totally to withdraw his Holy Spirit, and withhold the Light of his Countenance from them; and that living and dying in the same unrepented of, they must inevitably perish. But 'tis questioned by some, whether 'tis possible, for any truly converted and renewed by Grace, so to sin, as to provoke God totally to leave them to perish in their Sins, by final Impenitence

*tance and Unbelief.* Wherefore conceiving it a *Matter of great Concern*, in the Exercise of a *Christian Life*, to be rightly instructed herein, I shall prosecute my *Conceptions* already laid down, *Part the 1st. Page the 6th. of this Book, Viz. That 'tis possible for a Person truly converted to God, by and of his Grace, so to depart from him by Unbelief, and other provoking Sins, as to cause God totally, and finally to give them up to the Captivity of Satan and their own Hearts Lust; and Eternally to perish in and for the same.* Now before I enter upon any further Proof (for several Scriptures have been cited already) I shall endeavour to remove Two main *Stumbling Blocks* that lie in the Way, very much impending or hindering many Persons from the *Cheerful Reception of* and closing in with this *Truth of God.*

The first is, some assert. That this Notion is a less Peace-ful, and more Uncomfortable Doctrine, than is that Doctrine that tells us, That 'tis impossible for any Soul, once really u-  
nised,

nited to Christ by Faith, ever to set it self out of Gods Favour, or by any means miscarry, in respect to its Eternal Happiness.

( 2 ) They alledge, that this Latter Opinion hath a Greater Tendancy to draw forth the Soul in Love to God and Admiration of his Goodness, &c. than that we plead for. Now that these are only the Vain Imaginations of Man's Mind, or Delusions of Satan to shipwrack the Souls of Men, I shall, I trust; plainly discover. wherefore to the first,

( 1 ) Whatever Peace, or Comfort, the Doctrine of the Impossibility of the Saints final Miscarrying by Sin, affordeth more than that for which I plead; it is only such a Comfort as men may have in the Way of Sin and Death, such a Peace as we find mentioned, Deut. 29. 19. which is not true, being not the Peace of God; Isa. 48. 22. for the same Notion, that comforts me, by telling me, that in the Way of Sin, I cannot totally, or finally miscarry, will or may afford me the same Comfort, whilst  
captivated

*captivated, and enslaved, by Corruption, and Temptation; as it doth, whilst I keep close to God, in the Way of Faith, and Obedience; if not, what betterness, or what more Peaceful and Comfortable Doctrine is it, than that we hold; for we believe, and teach, that in the Way of Righteousness (i. e.) Faith, Hope, and Love; there is no possibility of miscarrying, and so no discomfort.*

( 2 ) 'Tis most apparent, that the Principal Cause of that Breach, that is made in the Peace of Gods Children, ariseth, either by their being Inactive in some Grace, Remiss in some Duty, or Indulgent to some Corruption; wherefore that Doctrine, that hath the Greatest Tendency to reduce the Saints of God, to such a Course of living in any kind, must needs be the less Peaceful, and most Uncomfortable Doctrine; and that such is the Genius of that Notion we oppose, is most visible to every Unprejudiced Mind.

( 3 ) Nothing is more evident, than that that Doctrine, not only leads to Sin and Apostacy, but like-  
wise

wife involves *many a Poor Soul*, in deep Distress and Despair; for being overcome by Temptation, or growing Cold and Life-less, in the Things of God, as the best of Gods Children are too prone unto. This Notion secretly thus treats the Soul, Surely my Profession is nothing, I am none of the Elect, if I were, I should not live as I do, or as I have done; and so tends to drive the Soul wholly from God, and his Ways, and hath caused some to wish themselves in Hell, that they might know the worst of their Misery; and likewise provoked them to put an untimely End unto their Days.

(4) Nothing is more evident than that there is few of the Pretenders to this Doctrine, that can in their most serious and retired thoughts, tell their own Souls, *I am so sure of my Election, Vocation, and Adoption, that for my part, I never fear falling away*; for if I do fall into Sin, yet I am sure, I shall not, I cannot miscarry therein. Now if there be few, or none, that have arrived to this Confidence, what good can this Doctrine

Doctrine do them ? For certainly ( if true , yet ) it can do none any good, but such as can apply it unto themselves.

( 3 ) We are not to judge of the truth of any Doctrine, by the Comfortableness of it ( especially when it speaks Comfort to Persons in a Way of Sin ) but by the Assurance we have of its Foundation in the Word of God. Suppose One should come and Preach this Doctrine, That God will save all men without Exception, Sinners as well as Saints, and that the Saints do as truly and as highly please God, in their Rebellion against him, as in the Way of their Duty. This Doctrine must needs be very Pleasing and Comfortable to our Corrupt Nature; but would any therefore imbrace it, Nay, I am perswaded, should God send an Angel from Heaven, with such a Message as this, to any true Child of God, I am come to tell thee, if thou pleasest God will now enter into such a Covenant with thee, that he will make sure thy Eternal Salvation to thee, tho' thou livest



in never such *Rebellion* and *Disobedience* against him ; fulfil the *Desires* of the *Flesh* and of the *Mind* ; gratifie the *Devil* and his *Temptations*. I say , I am persuaded no *Child* of *God* would dare accept of such an *Offer* ; but would rather say , *No Lord* : I desire not *Heaven* ; but in the *Way* of *Faith* and *Holiness* , I desire not *thy Love* ; but in the *Way* of *Love* and *Obedience* to thee. How then can we admire and espouse such a *Doctrine* or *Decree* , which had we been at the making of , we would have rejected , as unbecoming the *Perfections* of *Gods Nature* , and as no ways suitable to the *New Nature* he hath created in us by his *Word* and *Spirit*.

6. It must needs be dishonourable to *God* to go out of the *way* and *method* of his *own appointment* , for any *incouragement* or *consolation* , to hearken to a *Spirit* of *Errour* and *Delusion* , to encrease our *Comforts* , or supply the *Wants* of our inward *Man* : Yet such I conceive the *Notion* pleaded against , will be sufficiently demonstrated to be.

( 7. ) The

( 7 ) The blessed *Angels* continue the Favourites of God in a Way of Perfect Holiness and Intire Obedience, yet I suppose none dare imagine, that their Condition is ever the less *Comfortable*, because no Allowance is given them in the least, to prevaricate from the Law of their Creator. Yea, are obliged to an Uniform, Constant, and Intire Obedience, upon the Forfeiture of their *Eternal Happiness*.

I shall now briefly take notice of the Second Consideration to wit, that the contrary Notion is supposed to have a greater Influence upon the Soul, to engage it to love God, and admire his Goodness, &c.

Reply, ( 1 ) As hath been noted, God will esteem that no Real Admiration of this Grace, which supposeth him a Lover or Favourer of Sinners in their Sins; for indeed, it is an Admiring of that which is not; and so Creating a False idea of God in our Understandings, which is Gross and Impious; for 'tis a changing the Glory of the Incorruptible God, into an Image

Image made like to corruptible Man; which is not only highly dishonouring; but mightily provoking to the Eyes of his Glory. But,

(2.) This Doctrine is so far from advancing the Glory of God, that it supposeth him to act below that Prudence he hath imparted unto his Creature. For as no Rational Understanding, whether Parents or Friends; will promise Love or Favour to any Child or Person, let them behave themselves as they will against them; so no One considerate and enlightened Mind, would really commend such a Disposition in any Person, or love and admire them e're the better for it, Were it to be found in any Mortal.

(3.) This Notion cannot have a greater influence upon the Soul, to draw forth its Love to God, than that we plead for; because the Argument of the former is not so Strong and Powerful, as is that of the Latter Notion; for every enlightened understanding doth readily apprehend, that every Action and Thing, is so

so much the more desiræable and enforcing, by how much the greater good shall appear to depend upon it. He that shall perswade me to love serve, or depend upon such a Person or Friend; because in so doing I shall find him a *Loving and faithful Friend* unto me, lays me under a greater *Obligation* thereunto, than he that shall tell me that he will love me nevertheless, whether I respect or love him, or not.

(4) If such a *Notion* hath any such proper, convincing, and engaging *Nature* in it, as Powerfully to perswade the *Soul* to love God. *What Reason can be given, Why God hath not revealed this Truth to Sinners, as well as Saints; to men Carnal, as when renewed; or why do not Ministers Preach this Comfortable and Engaging Doctrine to them; especially seeing this Doctrine is more properly adapted to men in such a Condition, than to men, whose minds are sanctified by the Blood of Jesus.* This Doctrine as hath been already shewed, hath no Relish or Savour to their Spiritual Palates.

Well,

Well, but some are affrighted at this Doctrine, to wit, the possibility of a true *Believers* falling away; because of the supposed discomfort that there is in it, by being in continual danger of miscarrying. I shall therefore remove this Objection likewise, by doing these *Two things*, *First*, Make it appear that that Doctrine, that supposeth a possibility of a *Total and Final Perishing*, is the most safe and surest Doctrine. *Secondly*, That no true *Believer*, is in any such possibility of *Falling*; as that any need to disturb his *Spiritual Peace*, and *Comfort* on that *Account*.

*First*, The Doctrine that supposeth a Possibility of *Falling* (as before-Noted) is the safest, &c. because we all grant a Possibility of our being under a *Mistake* in the *Matters* of our *Faith*; we do not pretend to *Infalibility*. And One would think, no one should be over confident herein, that shall consider the many *Warnings* and *Cautions* God hath given in his Word, to preserve Men from *Falling*; and the many *Exam-*  
*ples*,

as we have in *Scripture* and  
 Common Experience, of those that  
 have so fallen. So then, supposing but  
 a Possibility of a Mistake, in our Notion  
 on this Account; that Doctrine must  
 needs be the safest, which supposeth  
 a Believer may so Sin as to fall, and  
 perish; for no *Rational Understanding*  
 can deny, but where there is a  
 Real Danger, the Knowledge and  
 Belief thereof, is more probable to  
 prevent it, than a Total Ignorance of  
 the same. He that shall know, that  
 in such a Way there is a Dangerous  
 Pit, into which he may fall, if he  
 take not good heed; certainly  
 is in less danger of falling in  
 thereunto, than he that doth not  
 know, or will not believe, there  
 is any such in the Way. 'Tis  
 good to be sure, is a Good Pro-  
 verb, and therefore we add, *fast*  
*bind and fast find*. If we do but sus-  
 pect a Danger it produceth Care,  
 whether it be real or no; and where  
 there is but a bare possibility of Dan-  
 ger, 'tis good to be on the safest  
 side; so that suppose our Notion be  
 false;

false, viz. That a Child of God may sin it self out of God's Favour, and so perish. eternally yet it can do us no harm in respect to our eternal Condition, our misapprehensions of God cannot make any alteration in his Decree. But on the other hand, if so be, after that we have been once enlightened and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and been made Partakers of the Holy Spirit, &c. if we shall adventure in the way of Sin, on a belief that we cannot thereby miscarry, in respect to the eternal concerning of our Souls, and so go on, and add Sin to Sin, till our Iniquities provoke God to cut us off therein, *and he swear in his Wrath, we shall never enter into his Rest,* Our Opinion of a non-possibility of Miscarrying, will be of no service or benefit to us at that day, when all the Earth shall be judged according to the Gospel, but will administer infinite and eternal Cause of Grief and Sor-

D

row

row to us, in that we hearken-  
 ed to such a Delusion. And that  
 too many Souls have been by this  
 Device of Satan so lull'd asleep  
 in Sin, as never to awake thence,  
 till they have found themselves  
 irrevokably sunk in Eternal Mife-  
 ry, is a Subject that deserves ra-  
 ther matter of Lamentation and  
 Grief, than the least Hesitation  
 or Doubt; but, *secondly*, Our Opinion is the  
 safest Doctrine on the Account of  
 our present Spiritual Comfort and  
 Peace, for all our differing mind-  
 ed Brethren grant, Men may  
 sin away their Comforts and E-  
 vidences for Heaven, cause God  
 to hide his Face, &c. wherefore  
 then that Doctrine which is most  
 properly adapted to prevent a  
 Believers falling into Sin, must  
 needs be the most safe and effe-  
 ctual, to preserve the Soul in  
 Spiritual Peace and Joy, and that  
 our Doctrine of the dangerous  
 Nature of Sin, is more proper-  
 ly so adapted; hath been before  
 shewed



shew'd ; but further , Our Do-  
ctrine is no such frightful *Levia-*  
*than* (as some imagine) that it  
must needs disturb the Peace and  
Quiet of the Soul of any true  
Christian : For,

( 1 . ) 'Tis certain there is a  
great deal of difference between  
a meer possibility, and an *emi-*  
*nent danger*, a thing may possibly  
be, which yet we are not *immi-*  
*nent danger of*, nor do we live in  
continual dread and fear in our  
mind about. We may possibly  
be drown'd, or come to some  
sudden Death, or by laying vio-  
lence hands on our selves, deprive  
our selves of Life, yet this admi-  
nisters no anxiety or trouble of  
mind to well regulated Under-  
standings ; so that tho' we hold  
a possibility of *sinning* and *falling*  
away, yet we likewise hold we  
are in no *eminent danger* so to do,  
we are guarded from any servile  
or slavish Fears on this account,  
by the faithful Promise of an  
Almighty and Immutable God.

- *God that cannot lie*: We know  
 and may improve this knowledge,  
 that we are as sure and safe for  
 Heaven, as if we were there al-  
 ready, in case we do not wilfully  
 run away from God, and chuse  
 our own Destruction, if we act  
 but according to the Principles  
 of that Divine Nature that is in-  
 dwelling in us, we may in an  
 holy Triumph and full Assurance  
 of Faith, sing such a Requiem  
 unto our Souls, as did the Apo-  
 stle. Rom. 8. 31. *I am persuaded that*  
*neither Death nor Life, nor An-*  
*gels, nor Principalities, nor Pow-*  
*ers, nor things present, nor things*  
*to come, nor height, nor depth, nor*  
*any other Creature, shall be able to*  
*separate us from the Love of God*  
*that is in Christ Jesus.* Yet not-  
 withstanding we ought with him  
 to keep under our Body, and  
 bring it into subjection, least that  
 by any means (tho' we have been  
 never so instrumental to save o-  
 thers) we our selves should be-  
 come cast-aways, 1 Cor. 9. 27.

'Tis

'Tis the most unreasonable thing in the World for a Child of God to live under perplexing Fears and Doubts, *Psal.* 42. 5. 11. It argues we do not believe that God whom we own and serve, to be as good as his word ; if we did, and liv'd in the lively Exercise thereof, we might always *with joy draw water out of this Well of Salvation.* We might continually make our boast in God, and say, *God is on our side, who can be against us ; that is, who can harm us ; He'll be a Sun to comfort us, and a shield to defend us ; He'll give us Grace here, and Glory, Immortality, and Eternal Life hereafter,* *Isa.* 12. 3. *Psal.* 84. 8. *Rom.* 8. 31. *Psal.* 84. 11. *Wherefore I'll not fear what Men or Devils can do against me.* I might here enlarge, but I forbear, wherefore,

(2.) Our Doctrine of a possibility of falling from Grace, hath not any thing terrible or

frightful in it, unless the true Fear of God and care of our Souls be a terrible and frightful thing; which if it be so, we may, and ought to Pray to be more and more possessed with such Fears and Terrors; for we can have no ground to be afraid of the Doctrine, unless we have a mind to be fearless of God, and careless of our Souls. He that shall desire long Life, and purely out of love to Life itself, would not esteem his Life ere the more burthen some, in case God should grant him a Lease thereof for a Thousand Years, and yet with this limitation, that he would not wilfully destroy himself, by thrusting a Sword into his own Bowels; leaping down some high Pinacle, or the like; but in case he were desirous not only of the Security of his Life, but extravagantly to shew desperate Tricks without fear or danger, as to leap into Fiery Furnaces, or Caldrons of boyling Lead; run  
into

into the mouth of Lyons, or live without the use of Food, Sleep, or Rayment, then indeed another kind of grant or lease were necessary for him. In like manner, he that shall singly desire the Eternal Security and Life of his Soul, is sufficiently confirmed therein, and guarded from all disquieting Fears and Terrors, by such a conditional Promise made unto him by God, as that it shall certainly be his Portion, provided he will not desperately run upon the bosses of God's Buckler; will not leap down from the Pallace of Life, into the Chambers or Dungeon of Death, &c. But if he should moreover desire a liberty to let the Reins of his Flesh loose, to fall in with Satan and the Children of his Kingdom, to fight under his Banner, against the God of Heaven, &c. then indeed such an absolute Decree for his Salvation, against all *intervention and opposition* whatsoever,

(as is by our *Opponents* fancied) were much better accommodated, yea absolutely necessary in his case. But as no Child of God can possibly desire any such grant from his Heavenly Father, so 'tis as impossible that God should make any such grant to any of his Children; for what God decreed to do, may be lawfully pray'd for at his hands; but,

(3.) That Doctrine must needs be most frightful and dis-affecting, if weigh'd in the balance of an unprejudic'd and thinking Mind, which supposeth an impossibility for persons to fin themselves out of God's Favour, because it secretly gives liberty, if not enticeth the Soul unto sin; and Scripture, and Experience assures, sin is the original and fountain of all Misery; nothing so formidable or rightfoul as sin; yea nothing freally frightful or prejudicial, but as it becomes so by means thereof.

thereof. Death which is the King of Terrors, yet hath nothing Terrible or Frightful in it, but what our Sins have made so. Now the Notion which we plead for, is most clearly and powerfully adapted, to the bridling of Corruption, to the beating down our Bodies, to beget in the Soul an hatred to, and a continual War against all the remainders of Sin, and Assaults of Temptation, is visible to every rational Mind. Are not such Cautions as these more likely to banish Sin out of the dominion of the Soul ; *Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the Living God, lest ye be hardened by the Deceitfulness of Sin, lest sinning wilfully after ye have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remain no more sacrifice for sin, nothing but a fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, that shall devour the Adversaries,* then such smooth and bewitching

ing Language as this, *Cheer up, Soul, art thou a Member of Christ, here is Comfort for thee, thou canst never sin thy self out of his Favour; He Loves thee as truly and fully, tho' thou commit never so many and great Sins, as he would in case thou livedst the Life of the most Vertuous and Pious Christian.* Which Doctrine is most to be regarded, that which we find recorded in the Sacred Sriptures, which are the Dictates of Eternal Verity, or those which only we hear from the Lips and Pens of fallible Mortals. God in his Word is not yea and nay.

Another Obstruction to the Truth pleaded for; *Is, a misunderstanding of Scripture Promises, taking those for absolute and unconditional, which are not so.* For nothing being more frequent than for the Lord in his Word to make his Promises absolute, and without any condition exprest, when, yet a condition must be implied; as for instance, our Savior saith, *Mat. 10. 32, 33. He that confesseth me before Men,*  
him



him will I confess before my Father which is in Heaven; and he that denieth me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven: now both Promise and Threatning are absolute, and without any exprest condition; yet nothing is more evident than that a condition must be implied in them, (*viz.* Their persevering in either state unto the end) for Judas confessed Christ before Men, yet will not Christ confess him before his Father, because he continued not to confess him to the Death. In like manner Peter denied Christ before Men, yet will not Christ deny him before his Father in Heaven, because he did not persist or persevere to the end in denying of him: So that whenever God makes promise of *Eternal Life and Blessings unto Men*, or threatens them with *Eternal Death*, we are always to understand, God includes and intends therein, their continuance and perseverance in such state unto the Death; For it is the end always that crowns the Action; 'tis as the Tree falleth that it lieth; 'tis not what we were, but

but what we are when Judgment finds us. The Thief on the Cross remained a vile sinner, and so a reprobate wretch until his dying hour ; but leaving this World a Penitent, was immediately transmitted into *Paradise*, and became a precious Vessel of Election and Heir of Glory, *Luk. 23. 43.* So likewise that servant of Christ, and thereby Heir of Glory, that after a long time spent in the Vineyard of his Lord, shall turn an evil one, and say in his heart, *his Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the Drunken;* the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, *Mat. 24. 48, 49, &c.* so that we are to understand all the Promises and Threatnings of God in Scripture, according to that plain and positive Light and Guide, which God hath given to us, *When I say to the Righteous he shall surely live.* That is as much as if God should say, *Tho' I make my Promise never so absolute express, and without all condition, yet ye must always understand a condition is intended, and to be understood in them, For if that Righteous Man turn from his Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, &c. all his Righteousness shall not be remembered ; but for his Iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it : so*  
when

when God says to the Wicked, *He shall surely die*, yet if he turn from his Wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, &c, Ezek. 33. 18 to 20. Now that the Scripture speaks here of such as are real Godly, and real Wicked, of Eternal Life, and Eternal Death, were not Men perverse and wilfully blind; the whole Text and Context is so plain, that it will admit of no rational contradiction. Is not the Wicked plainly opposed unto the Righteous? Will God say to any one, but one truly Righteous, with a well pleased Righteousness in the sight of God, he shall surely live? This would contradict the whole drift and body of Scriptures, and would render God inconsistent with, and divided against himself, and that this must intend eternal Life, is evident, because 'tis of such a Life and Death he is here speaking, as will appear if it be minded, that he saith to the returning sinner, *He shall live, he shall not die*; the which must respect a spiritual and eternal Life and Death, because no Man whether Righteous or Wicked, is exempted from a natural and temporal Life and Death, and this interpretation is fully evinc'd by the Prophet, Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. to which I refer the Reader, and beg him yet further to consider, That the Promises of God are every whit as full and

and express to preserve his People from all sin, as they are to give them eternal Life, see *Luke* 11. 74, 75. *Rom.* 6. 14. *Phil.* 1. 6. *1<sup>st</sup> Ju.* 2. 14. *John.* 3. 6, 9. and 15. 18. And yet notwithstanding many of God's Precious Children (Experience as well as Scripture testifies) have fallen into many gross and foul Iniquities, yet must we not charge God either with their sins, nor with breach of Promise, because however absolute his Promise was to them, yet a condition was implied in it, *viz.* their performing that part of their Duty, which was obligatory on them, in order thereunto: God performed; doth and will perform his part (as hath been shewn already) not only in turning them from sin to righteousness, but in keeping them in the way thereof unto the end; so that none of their Foot-steps shall slide, if they continue to live by Faith upon, and in the use of the means prescribed by him, in order thereunto. So that as Men, (or as a True Believer) may sin; that is, willingly and wickedly depart from God, notwithstanding the Promise of God to the contrary; so likewise they may perish in and by their sin, notwithstanding all the assurances God hath made of giving Eternal Life unto them. In further proof of this Truth, I shall urge a few Considerations, and so conclude.

Con. 1. Men may make Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience, 1 Tim. 1

19. have it overthrown, 2 Tim. 2. 18

2. Men enlightened by Grace, taster of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Word of God, and Powers of the World to come partakers of the Holy Spirit, clean escaped from the pollutions of the World, thro' the knowledge of Jesus Christ, being Sanctified by the Blood of the Covenant, &c. (The highest and truest Character that are any where given of true Believers in Scripture.) These may fall away and sin to that degree, That there is no renewing them again to Repentance; nothing to be look'd for of them, but a fearful and fiery Indignation. Their latter end will be worse with them than their beginning, 2 Pet. 2. 8, 19, 20. Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. and 10. 26, 27, 28, 29.

(3.) Whatsoever the Scripture supposeth to be, may possibly be. Now 'tis plain, the Scripture supposeth a True Believer may fall away and perish. (1.) Because the Apostle speaking of himself and to other True Believers, Heb. 10. 19. to 29. saith, If we sin wilfully, &c. (2.) The Promises and Threatnings which God hath made to, or concerning True Believers in case they continue, or continue not unto the end, plainly speaks a possibility of their fall and ruin; for God sets not up meer Nullities to attain

or

to allure his Children with ; see *Mat.*  
*4. 13. John 8. 31. Rom. 11. 21, 22,*  
*13. Heb. 10. 38. Rev. 3. 11.*

(4.) The tenour and tendency of  
 the contrary Notion (as hath been in  
 part shewed) viz. To rob God of his  
 Glory in many, if not in most of his  
 Divine Attributes, as Wisdom, Truth,  
 Holiness, Impartiality, &c. as also to  
 dispirit and enfeeble men in the practick  
 part of Godliness, and encourage them  
 in the way of sin and death ; as also  
 the clear tendency, that the Doctrine  
 we plead for, hath to advance all the  
 perfections of God's Nature in the  
 truth and purity of them and real  
 Godlikeness in the Hearts and Lives of  
 Men ; these do abundantly justify  
 and confirm us in our Faith therein :  
 For such is the property and tendency  
 of that Divine Principle of the Love  
 of God, where it is shed abroad in  
 the heart of any Creature, that it e-  
 steems and prosecutes the Honour of  
 God, and the promotion of Godliness  
 in the hearts and lives of Men, above  
 all secular Interests and Advantages  
 whatever. Wherefore my unfeigned  
 Desire and Prayer unto God is, That  
 this my poor Endeavours may be by  
 his special Blessing made in some sort  
 instrumental toward the accomplish-  
 ment of that I-eter-Day-Glory, where-  
 in The knowledge of God shall cover the  
 Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea.

F I N I S.

TRUTH and DUTY,  
Mans Chief Interest

O R

*A Modest Essay,*

To advance the Knowledge,  
and Practice of Gods Will, in  
those Two main Truths of  
God, and Controversies of  
the Church; Baptism and the  
*Sabbath Day*, Humbly offer-  
ed to the due Examination,  
and Impartial Judgement,  
of every Ingenious and  
Well-disposed Christian: es-  
pecially such as Labour in  
the Word and Doctrine.

---

*Prove all things, hold fast to that which  
is good, 1 Thes. 5. 2.*

*He that turneth away his Ear from  
hearing the Law (i. e. any part of  
Gods revealed Will) his Prayer (yea  
his Person, and all his Performances)  
shall be an Abomination. Unto JE-  
HOVAH; Prov. 28. 9*

---

London, Printed for the Author.  
In the Year, 1689.